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# HENRY BEYLE

(OTHERWISE DE STENDAHL)

## A Critical and Biographical Study

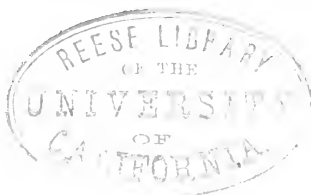
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*ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS AND UNPUBLISHED LETTERS FROM  
THE PRIVATE PAPERS OF THE FAMILY OF BEYLE*

BY

ANDREW ARCHIBALD PATON

AUTHOR OF "RESEARCHES ON THE DANUBE AND THE ADRIATIC," AND  
"A HISTORY OF THE EGYPTIAN REVOLUTION"



LONDON

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1874

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PREFACE.

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MAH

Who was Henry Beyle? is a question I have more than once heard asked by people who would have been offended had they been supposed to belong to the non-literary class. Beyle was not a man of universal fame like the Hugos and Lamartines; nor a man popular and successful, with a distinct specialty, like a Scribe, a Eugène Sue, or a Paul de Kock; nor one of those noisy politicians who write history; nor of those quiet historians who give the state the benefit of their theories; nor a mere critic like the Villemains or Sainte Beuves, however able they may have been. But as a miscellaneous prose writer, who has tried romance, biography, art, criticism, and philosophic disquisition, he was one of the most original of modern French *litterateurs*—one of the most eccentric, and, at the same time, one of the most brilliant individuals of modern French society. Inferior to Balzac as an artist, he certainly was his superior in insight into the science of life, and in width of range as a critic of the art of others. His erudition was extensive, but not ponderous, for his style was gay, garrulous, and familiar, so as to remind one more of the pleasant flavour of the literary merits of Voltaire than perhaps any other modern writer.

Therefore Beyle is one of the French classics of the nineteenth century, and has his place on the French Parnassus. Nay more, his reputation is European with the lovers of choice literature. But, except in his popular and charming "Life of Rossini," he is, to a certain extent, "caviare to the general," and is more enjoyed by those who have a certain social and intellectual culture than by the great outer public.

But apart from literary qualities, I think that his life offers the stuff for a varied biography that may interest the general reader. Beyle was both a regimental and a commissariat officer in those grand armies of the First Empire that swept like a torrent over Europe. He was an officer of the imperial household

when kings clustered round the fleeting successor of Charlemagne. Beyle made the retreat from Moscow, and when the fabric of the Empire disappeared like the palace of Aladdin, he became a dilettante in art and a loungeur in Italy when Canova and Rosini shone in their utmost lustre. In his long residence in the capital of the quondam Cisalpine Republic, his days were passed with tl. Jontis, the Manzonis, the Byrons, and the Silvio Pellicos.

On his return to France, he was appreciated by the Destutt de Tracys, the Lafayettes, the Balzacs, and many others, and was in the foremost ranks of the Romantic attack on the Classicists of the Restoration, and was perhaps, more than any other man, the writer who brought home Shakespeare to that public that had hitherto adored Racine. Such a man cannot be other than interesting, not only to the lover of literary, but even of general biography.

Beyle was not a great moral writer like the Pascals and the Vauvenargues, but as an acute observer of French manners, he certainly was one of the most brilliant successors of the Ducloses and the Champforts. He has, moreover, sounded the deepest depths and sinuosities of that Italian national character of which the De Brosses and others have painted the surface so ably and so agreeably. Political revolutions have agglomerated rather than fused the component parts of old Italy; and even if the fundamental peculiarities of peoples did not change so slowly, the writings of Beyle on Italy would not be the less valuable. Indeed, it is to be remarked, that those who have had the fullest opportunities of observing how the Italian mind operates in every variety of conjuncture, have been the readiest to acknowledge the truth, felicity, and even profundity of the conclusions of Beyle on this distinct and peculiar nationality.

It remains to me to state the very great obligations under which I find myself to the surviving members of the family of Beyle, who, with an amount of kindness and of true French-courtesy which I cannot sufficiently acknowledge, placed at my disposal, with slight reserves, the whole of the intimate correspondence of Beyle with his family, no part of which has appeared in the collected edition of Beyle's letters published some years ago by his friend and executor, M. Colomb.

It is difficult to overrate the value of such a treasure-trove to a biographer of Beyle. His sister Pauline was the most confided, beloved, and intimate of all his correspondents, and to this lady,



who appears to have been a person of considerable mental powers and accomplishments, Beyle photographed the inmost recesses of his soul during the most active and stirring period of his life. After Beyle became an author, and placed himself in relations of acquaintance with men having a taste for letters, and, in some cases, persons of literary celebrity, there is no great difficulty in tracing his career. The publication of his works was his principal business, and thenceforward the circumstances of his life were closely attached to the preparation and publication of these works. But until this correspondence was placed in my hands, the materials for the construction of Beyle's biography, from the period of his entrance into Government employment down to the fall of the Empire, were rather scanty. Here I saw at once how he served his apprenticeship to that knowledge of the human heart, as well as of literature and art, displayed in his subsequent works; and it is not difficult to trace, athwart the smoke of Marengo, Jena, Wagram, and Borodino, the profound future analyst of love and ambition, of tears and of laughter, or the light-hearted admirer of Cimarosa and biographer of Rossini, or the successor of Diderot as a fine-art critic, who so agreeably mingled general literature with special criticism of schools of painting.

Nor must I forget my obligations to Beyle's townsmen, M. Pilot, the erudite historian of Grenoble, and conservator of the archives of Dauphiné, whose acquaintance I made through the kindness of the head of his department in Paris; the accomplished Francis Wey, who had, in days gone by, more than once broken a lance with Beyle in the literary arena. This gentleman greatly assisted me by the light he threw on the early days of Beyle.

I beg leave also to acknowledge the kindness and courtesy of M. Gariel, the conservator of the library of Grenoble, in whose official care are the unpublished manuscripts of Beyle, and who, having been a collector of matter on his brilliant fellow-Dauphinois, was so good as to place his stores at my disposition, seasoned with more than one interesting anecdote of Beyle, which the reader will find in the course of the work.

I have, moreover, carefully gone over Colomb's various contributions to a knowledge of Beyle, as well as the Memoirs of him by Mérimée, Bussière, and Rochas, and the technically slighter but really racy notices of Beyle by Balzac, Arnould Frémy, Louis Enault, Charles Mousset, and others, who have offered the public

their reminiscences of, or criticisms on, Beyle through the medium of periodicals. In the Appendix will be found translations or condensations of some of the principal passages of the notices of Beyle by those accomplished critics and biographers.

M. Vice-President Bigillion, of the Delphinal Court of Grenoble, had the goodness to show me the original autograph wills of Beyle, and furnished me with copies of them. As some consuls are not without literary tastes in their leisure hours, I have also to acknowledge the great kindness with which M. Colnaghi, late consul at Milan, Captain Kelly, now resident there, and Her Majesty's consul at Civita Vecchia, aided me in places where Beyle resided so long. To which names I beg leave to add that of Professor Balbi, the accomplished son of my old friend the late Cavalier Adrian Balbi, of geographical and statistical celebrity.

I think it right to state, that the numerous extracts from the letters and works of Beyle are not literal extracts, but very close condensations, with rigorous attention to the conveyance of the exact meaning. Beyle was a spontaneous writer, and, like all such writers, inclined to diffusion and repetition. I apprehend that neither the memory of Beyle nor the patience of the reader will suffer by the method adopted.

For myself, I have had one object in view, not to produce an elegant composition while writing this biography, but to throw the greatest possible light on the career of one of the most original writers and eccentric individuals of the past generation. Goethe used to say to young authors, "Never present yourself to the public unless you have something curious and new to say to it." My end will be attained should the work be found not unworthy to correspond with this dictum.

A. A. P.

RAGUSA, 1874.

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# MEMOIRS OF HENRY BEYLE

(OTHERWISE DE STENDHAL).

## CHAPTER I

Grenoble, the Birthplace of Beyle — His Parentage and Education — Barnave, Chepy, and the Revolutionary Period—Domestic Anxieties —Completes his Education—Goes to Paris at the close of 1799.

BEYLE used to say that it was as wrong to apply to the generally speaking uninteresting French landscape the epithet of "La Belle France," as to speak of stern, puritanical England as "Merry England." But there are certainly parts of France to which the epithet may be applied, and to none more so than the Dauphiné. In the neighbourhood of the Isère, where the rugged Alps and sombre forests alternate with rich slopes of pasture and vineyard, is the city of Grenoble, once the Gratianopolis of the decline of the Roman Empire.

The interior of Grenoble has little architecture to recommend it save a court of justice in that style of the revival of which there are many charming specimens in France, from Anet to Chenonceaux, from the sumptuous palace to its miniature in the domestic hôtels of Rouen and other ancient towns. With the exception of this palace of justice and its noble halls, with their luxuriant wood-carving of free cinque-cento character, the interior of the town is plain and dull almost to the lugubrious. But what human pen can describe the glorious exterior and environs of the place? Salzburg alone of the European cities seems at all comparable to Grenoble in picturesque situation. The dark blue Isère, slightly speckled with foam, rushes down its inclined plane with the

rapidity of an alpine torrent. On one bank is the bulk of the town, on the other rises the castle, a mountain stronghold of great extent and formidable aspect from its precipitous and almost inaccessible sides. The wide plain of the Graisivaudan, smiling with culture, is seen far and near, dotted with villas and villages. Hills verdant with forests of waving oak and chestnut bound this plain; and beyond and above these the high and hoary Alps are visible in all the towering grandeur of jagged peak and primeval rock, rising out of snows which at noontide have tender shadows of the faintest azure, and at sunset successive gradations of effulgence from brightest gold to those richer orange tints that herald in approaching night.\*

The inhabitants of Grenoble have been always renowned for their sprightly character. Nor have men of solid renown been wanting to the native city of Beyle. The knightly Bayard, the acute metaphysician Condillac, the once renowned mechanical genius Vaucanson, the eloquent Barnave, and others of minor note, such as the "Gentil Bernard," were natives of the town in which, on the 23d January 1783, Marie Henri Beyle first saw the light.

Beyle was born in the sphere most favourable for a man of letters—that section of the middle class in which mental culture is conjoined with easy material circumstances. His father was an advocate at the bar of the Parliament of Grenoble, and his mother the daughter of M. Gagnon, an eminent physician.

Beyle lost his mother when only seven years of age, and the grandfather, M. Gagnon, appears to have been moved by tender affection for his deceased daughter to take her children home to him. The father, M. Beyle, senior, who lived much at his property at Claix, in the environs of Grenoble, saw the children when he was in town, and had them to spend their summer holidays with him at his country-house.

Beyle, senior, was a man of literary culture, and had a well-stored library of French, Italian, and English classics. He was sincerely attached to the House of Bourbon, and at the same time liberal in his political opinions. But the new democracy filled

\* The "Graisivaudan," or "Gratianswood" (Gratiani Valdis Densus), was the scene of the exploits of Lesdiguière, that great soldier of the Protestant cause, who, like his master and friend, Henri IV., turned Catholic for reasons of state. In his last days he was Constable of France. The plantations around his palace, with terraces and marble statues, are at the present time the public garden of Grenoble.



him with disgust, hence his preference for a philosophic retirement at Claix with his books and his flowers. His views on human life were considered profound, but in practice he was sybaritic in his habits, and careless in money matters, so that certain imprudent pecuniary investments told in the sequel unfavourably on the patrimonial interests of the family. We have no records of the capacity of Beyle's mother; but the maternal grandfather, M. Gagnon, having been a physician in good practice, was acquainted with physical sciences. He was the founder of the library of Grenoble, and considered the most literary person in the town, so that Beyle's own subsequent studies on human passions and on temperaments were no doubt due to hereditary qualities.

In the family, Beyle's favourite became in the sequel his sister Pauline, a young lady of remarkable intelligence and culture, but somewhat original and independent in her ways. She was three years younger than Beyle. In one of his later letters to her which has passed through my hands, I find his reminiscences to go back to childhood. How he did not love her much in infancy; how they had to suffer from a crabbed ill-natured aunt called Seraphine; how Beyle once beat his sister, and took refuge in the library of Claix; and how the father came in and threatened the little boy with, "Wretched child, I will eat you!" and how their favourite walk was by the pond-side, with magnificent views of the mountains beyond Voreppe. Whatever befell Beyle in after-life, whether in the whirl of Paris amusements, in the more momentous excitements of Napoleon's victories and reverses, or in the art studies and soft delights of his long Italian retirement, he always had a tender recollection of his beloved sister, and of Claix, with its modest house and garden, and its landscape of green fields and noble mountain profiles.

Beyle's first preceptors were priests, who during the revolutionary period found themselves fallen on evil tongues and evil days of persecution, even to the risk of life, and therefore sometimes suddenly quitted the tuition of the youthful Henri. In the case of Beyle, the boy was father to the man: he was not of a lymphatic, but of a nervous and sanguine temperament, full of curiosity and desire of excitement. One of his peculiarities in after-life was to assume many shapes and adopt many pseudonyms. Like Swift, he frequently addressed the public, not as a professed author, but as a member of some most unliterary trade or profession; and this propensity to the pseudonymous showed itself in early life.

In order to escape claustral discipline, Beyle wrote a letter in a feigned name to his grandfather, pointing out that it would be proper to send the youthful Henri to the "Temple Décadaire" of the philanthropists, where the young men were enrolled for the new Spartan sort of education of the young France of that age of social and political novelty ; but the cheat was discovered by a hunchbacked writing-master, who denounced it, to the ire of the grandfather.

In spite of this instance of secretiveness, the character of Beyle appears to have been generous and elevated. When all the senior members of the Colomb family were thrown into prison during the revolutionary Reign of Terror, the subsequent friend of Beyle, then a little boy, remained alone at home with a nurse, and on the following day was taken to the house of Beyle's grandfather. After dinner the boy slumbered, and yet overheard a conversation in the family as to whether it was safe to incur the suspicions of the "Commune" by harbouring the child of those in prison on political grounds. The ill-natured aunt wished to send off the boy Colomb ; but Beyle, not knowing that he was anxiously overheard by the friend of his future life, pleaded the cause of the other boy in such a manner as to strengthen their nascent friendship.

As the business of this book is not only the life of Beyle, but some little elucidation of the political history of the times in which he lived, we may premise that in 1760 commenced the sharp debates and contests between the Parliament of Dauphiné and the Government of Louis XV. as to taxation and the despotic registration of laws. The agitation of twenty-eight years later brought matters to a point, led as it was by such men as Monnier and Barnave. But the legal resistance to despotism had results which the moderate Monnier never anticipated. The revolutionary spirit took possession of Grenoble. On the 7th June 1788 took place the first attack of the people on the troops, with tiles taken from the roofs of houses, and called "La journée des tuiles" (Pilôt's "Département de l'Isère Faits Historiques"). Bernadotte, then a sergeant in the "Regiment Royal Marine," was wounded in the head on this occasion. It was the first overt act of revolution, not only in Grenoble, but of France itself, and has been characterised as such by several eminent historians.

During the four following years the inhabitants followed with intense interest the progress of events in Paris ; but the Republic

in Grenoble, although completely victorious, was not sanguinary ; and many tears were shed when Barnave, their brilliant Girondin townsman, perished on the Paris scaffold on the 28th of November 1793. In order to revolutionise the Dauphiné in the Jacobin sense, the Commune of Paris sent one Chepy, a native of Champagne, to Grenoble. He was then a man of thirty-eight years of age, with a rubicund countenance, a lively eye, and a sonorous voice. He spoke with fluency, and even with purity, and a literary elegance of style. His title was that of "Commissary of the Executive Power."

Chepy began his work by ferreting out all the dépôts of church silver in private houses, aided by a committee of twenty-one persons. He ordered the arrest of the Bishop as an enemy to philosophy. But Rivier, the president of the committee, said that religion was necessary to prevent the common people from committing robbery and murder. But he was informed that a "bas peuple" did not exist in France, as all were equal. This man, who passed the night in weeping on account of the unjust arrest of the Bishop, was next day most ungallantly taken to task for having spoken to a *citoyenne* under arrest with his hat off !

Sixty-five arrests and sixteen summonses to give explanations now followed. With these arrests commenced "the Reign of Terror" in Grenoble ; not actual guillotine massacres, but the acute apprehension that they were about to supervene—a most awful condition of the mind for pacific citizens. There were no burnings of chateaux in Dauphiné, but Grenoble was melancholy and deserted. In the Graisivaudan the peasants would not take the assignats, and hid their grain ; hence successive mobs and riots in the town, with plundering of flour stores and bakers' shops.

On the 6th of December 1793, the cathedral was converted into a "Temple of reason and truth," Chepy in a Phrygian cap being the chief preacher on the occasion.\* This not ineloquent popular tribune, after all his fine harangues, occupied the obscure post of chancellor of the French Consulate at Rhodes, and at the close of the Empire was commissary of police at Brest.

\* I give a specimen of a priest of this curious period. "V. A. ex-chartreux est depuis la revolution prêtre constitutionnel abjure le fanatisme, part pour la defense de la patrie, et pour donner le coup de grâce au monstre encore palpitant vient de faire proclamer son mariage."—(Albin Gras., "Deux Années de l'Histoire de Grenoble.")

The reader may imagine the temporary alarm of the Beyle, Gagnon, and Colomb families. But at Paris, Heurion, the Jacobin deputy of the Isère to the Convention, pleading with Robespierre, stated that he would be personally responsible for the democratic sentiments of Grenoble, and it was thus saved from having a bloody tribunal. A son of the Duke de Rohan and two priests were the only persons executed in Grenoble during the "Terror." It was in the house of his birth, at the corner of the Grande Rue and the Place Grenette, that the youthful Beyle was a contemporary and spectator of those events which he followed with an admittedly precocious intelligence. On the establishment of a central school, his priestly tutors were sent away; a free-thinking education succeeded to the ecclesiastical one, and until the close of his life Beyle was a determined sceptic.

M. Colomb, his schoolfellow and friend through life, gives a lively sketch of Beyle in these youthful days, which we condense for the British reader, who may not be familiar with proper names of persons and places in Grenoble.

"Beyle had a keen relish for reading, and a great desire to possess books. One of his first acts of independence was to purchase the works of Florian, on which he spent a louis d'or of twenty-four francs, which was all his capital at that time. He devoured in secret the simple romances of the good-natured Florian. How our young hearts beat with new sensations derived from the perusal of 'Estelle,' 'Galatée,' 'Gonsalve,' and 'Numa'!

"We had patriotic sentiments of admiration for the victories of the Republican armies, but, on the other hand, we had the Royalist opinions of our parents. One evening of January 1797, between seven and eight o'clock, Beyle and I with ten other comrades found ourselves opposite the tree of fraternity, which had a superscription painted on canvas—

"Hatred to Royalty.  
Constitution of the year III."

One of us fired at the painted canvas with heavy lead drops, so as to completely disfigure the emblem. This threw our families, who were already ill-famed with the Commune, into a mortal anxiety, for some people thought that there was a great conspiracy against the Republic; but the authorities treated it as having been done for a wager, and made light of it, consequently no arrest took place.

"Among the pupils of the Central School was a youth of fair complexion, vulgar face, athletic form, and rustic manners, who was nicknamed Goliath by the schoolboys. Beyle, who from his punchy form was called the walking turret [*la tour ambulante*], cracked his jokes on this man, who on one occasion would no longer stand them, and a conflict of fisticuffs ensued. The combatants were separated by their comrades, but a duel with pistols was arranged in the fosse of the rampart. The pistols were loaded, and four or five hundred persons were present to see the affair; but it ended in a burlesque interruption of all possibility of bloodshed by the interference of the bystanders."

Beyle at this time studied Latin, belles lettres, drawing, mathematics, and the higher principles of grammar. The principal professors of the new Central School had been selected by his grandfather, M. Gagnon, and therefore, with his natural talents, he made great progress, and gained most prizes. M. Gagnon took the most lively interest in his studies, the father continuing to live at Claix, in the environs, occupied with rural affairs. Beyle had a turn for mathematics; but it was especially in literature that his progress was rapid; and M. Bussière mentions that, when he was fourteen years of age, his school companions renounced the contest with him in belles lettres in recognition of his superiority, so that he gained the prize of literature without a contest. He studied mathematics in Grenoble down to the autumn of 1799; and as his father wished him to complete his studies at the newly-created Polytechnic School of Paris, which was speedily rising to a European celebrity, he left Grenoble for the French capital.

## CHAPTER II.

Paris in 1800—Beyle's Connection with the Daru Family—Becomes Supernumerary Clerk in the War Office—Accompanies the Army to Italy during the Campaign of Marengo—Becomes an Officer of Dragoons—Quits the Army, and Returns to Paris.

BEYLE arrived in Paris on the 10th November 1799, as the century was about to close. Paris was then in the high tide of the gaiety and laxity of the newly re-constituted society of the Directorial period. The huge nightmare of the Revolution had disappeared, and the astounding, almost incredible, victories of the youthful Bonaparte raised the public joy and enthusiasm to fever height. If the boy is father to the man, the man is the descendant of the boy. In Beyle's tender years we find the factors of his subsequent most cherished opinions. From the "Temple Décadaire" dates his confirmed opposition to all religious belief; and from the natural enthusiasm for the great soldier of the Republic grew that Bonapartist idolatry that shut its eyes to even the crimes and the errors of the First Empire. In Paris his tastes showed themselves to be rather literary and artistic than scientific. M. Bussière says that he went to Paris more pre-occupied with the pleasure of hearing Italian music than with mathematics; and what a triad of mathematicians then taught in Paris—Laplace, Lagrange, and Legendre!

It was a distant relationship with the Daru family that launched the youthful Beyle into the society of the Directorial period. The Darus were in the seventeenth century highly respectable tanners in the Rue du Bœuf of Grenoble; and, as in the case of a majority of the modern noblesse of France and England, the descendants of those enriched by trade and manufacture passed through the grades of the legal profession to the higher branches of administration. In the middle of last century the Daru of that day held the considerable post of secretary of the "Intendant" of Dauphiné, and afterwards settled with his family in the same capacity in Languedoc. Half a cen-

tury later, during the Directory, we find "M. Daru, père," living at Paris with his two intelligent and active sons, Pierre and Martial Daru, who had been especially noticed and employed by Carnot in his career of Minister of War and organiser of victory at the eventful period of the renovation of the military administration of France. They were both at this time in Carnot's office, and the former became one of the most important personages of the Consulate and the Empire—Napoleon's Commissary-General of those grand armies that for a few brief years swept victoriously over Europe. Successively Count of the Empire, Senator, Peer of Louis XVIII.'s creation, and President of the French Academy, this man inspired universal respect by his punctuality and integrity as a man of business, by the conciliatory amenity of his character in situations of great difficulty while serving the most unscrupulous of masters, and by an elastic intelligence and large general knowledge, which was not only displayed in his official functions, but made his conversation relished by that brilliant, literary, scientific, and artistic society of Paris which an Alexander von Humboldt has painted with such graphic felicity.

The man who has few allies must storm the world's ramparts himself. How rarely have those who possess allies, escorts, guides, adjutants, and supporters, the consciousness of their advantages! Among these latter was Beyle. The Darus repeatedly, during Beyle's career, got Fortune to knock at his door, but with disappointing results. If we consider the influence which such men could use, and in fact did use, for Beyle, the importance of such a connection is obvious. But Beyle, inconstant, wayward, and with the temperament of an artist, does not seem to have practically appreciated that which most ordinary prosaic men of the world would have grasped at. Beyle was a man of genius, but he had a hundred irresistible impulses which could not be squared with reason.\* Yet he was conscious of his own defects, and showed at a subsequent period that he could analyse the mental processes of the prudent and the self-commanding with the rarest felicity.

After getting over a supposed menace of chest-disease, Beyle lodged in the house of M. Daru in the Rue de Lille, which had

\* Rochas, his fellow-townsmen, paints him as "a man of mobility, with a passion for the unexpected and the novel" ("homme de cette mobilité, aussi passionné pour l'imprevu et le changement").—Rochas, "Biographie du Dauphiné."

formerly belonged to Condorcet. His principal expense was from the attraction of the bookstalls ; for he was from youth a *helluo librorum*, and bookstall-hunting was to the end of his life a favourite occupation. After the 18th Brumaire he was employed as a supernumerary clerk in the Ministry of War, Pierre Daru having become the secretary of the department. Beyle's orthography was not always perfect, and M. Daru pinked him as a gainer of literary prizes who had omitted to study the essential and preliminary.

Painting was one of the accomplishments studied by the future admirer of Correggio, Michael Angelo, and Leonardo. Regnault, had a not inconsiderable reputation even in the days of David, and Guérin was his master ; but Beyle does not appear to have pursued it seriously. The excitements of a military career and the attractions of literature stopped at the outset further prosecution of this charming art. The men of Paris appeared flat and prosaic to the young and romantic Beyle, full of enthusiastic admiration of poetry, of art, and of those beautiful alpine scenes which he had left behind him in his native Dauphiné. He was, moreover, too sincere : if a dullard or a bore fell in his way, he was rather too unscrupulous in showing impatience. But there was in the Paris of this period much to attract an intelligent young man. Through the Darus, Beyle visited several literary societies, and admired the beauty of Madame Constance Pipelet, a rival of the Récamiers and Talliens of the period. This lady, by second marriage, became Princess of Salm Dyck. Madame Tallien became by a second marriage Princess of Chimay ; and Madame Récamier was offered the hand of a Prince of the House of Prussia, had she consented to a divorce from the good-natured Récamier, which she declined to hear of.

But the campaign of Marengo approached, and Beyle's concluding labours in the Ministry of War were at the very period when Carnot was secretly forging those bolts which the young conqueror was about to launch in Lombardy, after the showy but really disappointing results of the Egyptian campaign. Beyle, it may be well imagined, joyfully accepted the invitation of the Darus to join them in this venture across the Alps ; and, indeed, his first temporary settlement in Italy, in the heyday of Napoleonic success, gave an impress to the whole of the future life of Beyle. When all other illusions had vanished and been dispelled, that of an existence in the capital of Lombardy, or on



the shores of its lovely lakes, remained uppermost in his mind as the thing most to be hoped for and desired.

In April 1800 Beyle quitted Paris for Dijon and Geneva, and from the latter city he was taken charge of during the passage of the Alps by an old captain, a friend of Daru, who improved him in equitation and in a knowledge in the odds and ends requisite for campaigning; and, as he climbed the heights, the imagination of the future historian of Italian painting and song seems to have made excursions of the most delightful description. In this expedition arts and arms were combined to inflame the fiery youth and the dilettante. He exclaims, with enthusiasm, "I had an execrable lot from seven to seventeen years of age; but, since I have passed the St Bernard, I no longer complain of my destiny!"

Beyle was first under fire when the army had to pass the small town and fortress of Bard, the cannon of which, perched on a conical rock, completely commanded the narrow defile of the Doria, and for a time did deadly execution. But this was not an obstacle to stop such a general and such an army. The passage was forced, and Beyle entered Ivrea with Lannes; and here Beyle was delighted to hear the first Italian opera in Italy, the "*Matrimonio Segreto*" of Cimarosa, which to Beyle was one of the greatest pleasures of his life. In one of his letters to his sister Pauline, he mentions not Ivrea, but Novara, as the place where the first audition of the "*Matrimonio Segreto*" gave him so much pleasure. Colomb, who had many of his papers, mentions Ivrea. Be this as it may, warlike adventure and music were the excitements of his soul at this time, and to these we may add painting.

Milan, as might be expected, made a great impression on the youthful Beyle. Although not in recent centuries the seat of a sovereign dynasty, Milan retained, nevertheless, something of the grand air of a capital, from the number of its wealthy families, the noble proportions of its domestic architecture, the abundance of shop luxuries, the crowds of foot-passengers, and the number of handsome private equipages that thronged its streets. Its cathedral, and last, not least, its public amusements—in particular La Scala, one of the most renowned opera-houses of Europe—were sufficient to delight Beyle, in addition to what every Transalpine enjoys after reading all one's youth about Italy—viz., the curious and peculiar pleasure of feeling

one's-self actually within the first large Italian town after passing the Alps.\*

On the 14th of June 1800, Beyle was, in his professional capacity as clerk of commissariat, present at a spectacle of a different description—the battle of Marengo—if not one of the greatest, at least one of the most rapid, brilliant, and decisive, of the marvellous Napoleon legend, which repaired the ugly rents made in the newly acquired possessions of the Republic during the hero's absence in Egypt, and which re-established the Cisalpine Republic.

Beyle then entered the office of M. Petiét, Governor of Lombardy, but getting tired of the desk, he in September following entered the Sixth Dragoons, and, after a month, received the *épaulette* of sous-lieutenant, and as aide-de-camp of one of the generals of division under Brune, he made the campaign of the Mincio, the success of which, combined with that of Hohenlinden, forced Austria to sign the Treaty of Luneville, and paved the way for the brief general pacification of Europe in 1801. Beyle, according to the opinion of his military superiors, acquitted himself most creditably in his duties; but his temper was lively, and a wound which he received in the foot was from a pink in a duel.

Beyle was delighted with the large towns of Northern Italy, which are so full of fascination for an artistic soul. He was not afraid to stand the fire of the troops of the hereditary rival of France; but it appears that he was neither true soldier enough, nor true philosopher enough, to withstand the ennui of the small garrison-town life of Savigliano in Piedmont, where he was quartered on the peace; and, to the disgust of his protectors, and the displeasure of his family, he resigned his commission and returned to Grenoble. The liberty of Paris and Milan, and the license and excitements of the Italian campaign, had spoiled Beyle for the enjoyment of the tranquil and methodical life of his father and grandfather.

Goethe justly compares the really strong and patient man in the successful quest of happiness to the knight of the Middle

\* In a note on Beyle's residences in Milan, obligingly communicated to me from that city, I find that he was introduced to the Palazzo d'Adda by the Darus, and that after the peace he made a trip to the Boromean Islands with a son of the Austrian General Melas, and was shown the laurel on which Napoleon had carved with his own hand the word "bataille."

Ages, who submitted passively to all the acts of penance previously to that investiture which gave him possession of the avenues to rank, wealth, and power, and to the favour of his lady-love. "For him," says Goethe, "who knows how to wait with patience, perseverance, and strength of soul, all the blessings and enjoyments of human life are accessible." This was a truth which Beyle, the brilliant Frenchman, never knew, or at least never realised. Ennui in a thousand shapes was the demon of Beyle's existence; sometimes in the form of a blank in social intercourse, or of the want of pabulum for his literary and artistic appetite, or in some indispenable ceremonial act to perform, or as often in the form of a bore, whose loquacity or vulgarity might disturb his golden daydreams. Ennui tortured Beyle through life. Now, the man of strong masculine temperament never has a moment of ennui; therefore, with these ever-recurring feminine vapours, Beyle was indisputably, however brilliant, eccentric, and original, yet certainly not a man of masculine and well-balanced mind.

After various negotiations with his father, an arrangement was made by which Beyle was to remove to Paris, and an allowance of 150 francs a month was to be paid to him. This income of five francs a day admitted of no luxuries, but Beyle made it sufficient for his purpose, which was to renew his real education by the perusal of the greatest classic authors of the old or new period. Montaigne, Montesquieu, Rousseau, Cabanis, the great physiologist, and Destutt de Tracy, the most popular philosophical writer of that day, were the favourite authors of Beyle during his second residence in Paris.

It was the period of the reconstruction of French society after the revolutionary crash, and of reaction against the political and irreligious theories of the Revolution. The brilliant Rivarol, in his exile at Hamburg, the judicious and practical Mallet Dupan, the too magniloquent Chateaubriand, the justly esteemed Joseph de Maistre, and Bonald, had fought the battle either of temperate liberty or of Christianity with signal ability.

In the seat of power was the youthful conqueror of Lombardy, with the fresh laurels of Marengo on his brow. He had outdone all the wonders of the Paladins of story; and even although unsuccessful in the East, the very boldness of his ventures in the countries of the mysterious and the marvellous had not diminished his prestige. He was the legendary and poetical hero of war; in the prose of politics abroad and at home, the unscrupulous

Italian statesman of the school of the Machiavelli period. What an incarnation of the creative genius and unscrupulousness of that Italian race that produced Christopher Columbus and Cæsar Borgia, Leonardo da Vinci and Gian Galeazzo Visconti !

Beside him was Talleyrand, with the distinction of the aristocrat, and with the suavity and perfect self-command of the priest. What a superabundance of the wisdom of the serpent and of the art of saying the right thing at the right time ; but with too little of the distinctly uttered individuality and strength of principle and will which mankind invests with the noble attribute of *character* !

Where was the crowd of bedizened nobles that once thronged to the Œil de Bœuf ? Gone to all the holes and corners of Europe, to grieve and lament, to project counter-revolutions and to sulphur matches for daily bread. Their gilded salons were still there, but peopled by enriched plebeians—a Barras or an Ouvrard—or bold and successful speculators of the “Black band,” fierce Phrygian-capped orators, now Turcarets or bowing courtiers, and sumptuous self-satisfied amphytrions. But the aristocracy of beauty still held its sway, at the head of which was the Récamier, sans shield, sans gules, sans or, sans argent, but supreme in expression, complexion, grace, symmetry, and that cordial goodness which doubled all her charms.

One of the most terrible of political tempests had swept over France, but fair weather and bright sunshine has returned to illumine the wreck of all this fleeting grandeur. The sufferers thought their misfortunes unique in human history. Error and delusion ! We open those curious pages of Aristotle, in which the sage of sages records the revolutions in those states that afterwards made up into vast conglomerates the Macedonian and Roman empires ; and in their countless revolutions we find faithfully recorded the perpetual doom of the rich when they are no longer strong enough to resist the poor.

## CHAPTER III.

1803—Paris during the Consulate—Talma and the French Theatre—Beyle studies Declamation—His Correspondence with his Sister—Precocity of Beyle's Intellect—His Pecuniary Straits—Project of Marriage—His Studies of Parisian Society.

THE reader may remember in Alexandre Dumas' curious novel of the "*Mémoires d'un Médecin*," a youth named Gilbert, who had the passion of the day for philosophising in season and out of season. The youthful Beyle reminds one of the spirit of that age. New Year's Day brings an effusion of affection to his sister Pauline, but tinted with that spirit of analysis which seems to envelop everything, even family ties. Addressing her from Paris on the 1st of January 1803, he writes:—

"How can I fail to write to her to whom I might for ever talk? I make progress in my studies here, it is true, but how cold is science compared with feeling! God, seeing that man is not able to feel perpetually, has given him science, in order to divert him from the indulgence of passions during his youth, and to occupy him in his last days. Most unfortunate and worthy of compassion is the cold heart which can only imbibe knowledge.

"I do not wish to remain for ever at Grenoble, because nothing is so painful to the soul like being surrounded by littleness. I am lodged on a sixth floor, opposite the Colonnade of the Louvre. Every evening I see the sun, the moon, and all the stars set behind the galleries which have seen the great age [*le grand siècle*]. I can imagine seeing the shades of the Great Condé, of Louis XIV., of Corneille, and of Pascal hidden behind those great columns, and their unfortunate descendants receiving an asylum in the midst of them. When I arrive at Grenoble we will go to Claix [where his father lived], and I will explain Tasso to you if you know enough of Italian for that. . . . This reminds me of '*Zadig*,' a little novel of Voltaire's, the object of which was to prove several philosophical truths as yet unintelligible to you; nevertheless, you can ask our grandfather to read it, and explain the things in it beyond your capacity."

In person, the subsequently heavy, corpulent Beyle was in these youthful days a dancer at endless balls. "Send me more gloves," was the burden of one of his letters to his sister Pauline. Those youthful Parisian ladies, who then danced in classic semi-nudity, as a Tallien did, pestered him with commissions for gloves when they knew that he came from the staple city of this Alpine manufacture.

Beyle again had a full opportunity of enjoying the theatre in the perfection of the so-called classic manner, which he afterwards, as a revolutionist, combated so rudely. Talma was in the zenith of his genius, and not as in his later period, when the caustic Paul Louis Courier described him as "a fat lover of sixty with a hoarse voice." With theatrical oratory in the legislative chambers, and the declamatory genius of Talma on the boards of the theatre, it is not surprising that the youthful Beyle had the mania of recitation, so that in February 1803 he burst a blood-vessel from declaiming alone in his room, after having caught cold the night before in waiting as one of the chilled *queue* of the theatre to witness a comedy in which the admirable Fleury played a leading part. This gave him a fright, and he wrote home to Grenoble with an uneasy apprehension of having a weak chest. But this fear was groundless. He grew to have a robust and almost herculean frame.

In his letters of this period, we find him constantly acting as an intellectual tutor to his sister Pauline, and trying to teach the "young idea how to shoot" in the mind of that lady.

"Men study in order to escape ennui, and our genius is often determined by the first object that presents itself. As a proof of this, I may mention the case of Vaucanson" [the celebrated mechanical genius of Grenoble], "a fine bust of whom is visible in the town library. His mother had for her confessor a monk whose cell was contiguous to the clock-tower. The boy had ennui while his mother was at confession, and this vacancy of mind led the young Vaucanson to study the movements of the pendulum. He approached the mechanism of the clock, and from step to step came to understand it. He planned a similar machine, and carried it out with a knife and pieces of wood so as to have a going clock, and thus from one step to another he ultimately came to make the celebrated mechanical flute-player."

In this letter Beyle gives some well-known anecdotes of Shakespeare, whose name he informs his sister is pronounced "Chèquespire."

A few days later Beyle writes convinced that the poor nations have been the most greedy of glory, and have more abounded in great men than the opulent nations. He maintains, with the ardour of a reader of the New Testament, of Plutarch, and of Cornelius Nepos, that virtue, happiness, and poverty form a trio that have close companionship. This Horatian sybarite began life, after the cessation of his scholastic studies, with the most rigorous Spartan philosophy.

On the 19th March, he begs his sister to avoid all running after conceits in style, "for there is nothing so disagreeable as to see people hunting after clever phrases." He counsels much perseverance in study. "I believe that there are few men who have so little natural capacity for languages as I have; but I felt the necessity of an effort, and two years hence I will be well acquainted with Greek, Latin, English, and Italian."

Beyle does not appear to have pushed Greek very far, but he became an excellent Italian scholar, thanks to Italian opera and the great classics of Italian poetry, which he knew almost by heart. At a subsequent period of life, he complained that he had little enjoyment left in the perusal of these masterpieces, because every line told him what was coming. In English his knowledge was considerable, and, after the Peace, he became a regular reader of the *Edinburgh Review*; but he always wrote English with Gallic locutions. In his confidential correspondence with his sister at a latter period, as well as in his own manuscript notes, there is much English, so as occasionally to form a curious mosaic. The object was, no doubt, to thwart indiscreet curiosity.

Beyle was at all periods of his life a great admirer of natural scenery and of beautiful gardens, but not of "Les Jardins" of the Abbé Delille. On this subject he writes to his sister in March 1803:—"Arrange to go to Claix as soon as I shall have arrived at Grenoble, for I love the fields, and not town mud. Man is happiest in the midst of trees, and there all the people, especially the Orientals, who are connoisseurs in pleasure, have placed their paradise: the Moslems will inhabit beautiful gardens after death. In 'Telemachus,' the Elysian fields have arbours. Adam and Eve dwelt in a garden. Let us therefore draw near to the country, and let us enjoy the authors who describe it, but not the Tartuffe lovers of nature, like the Abbé Delille. Bernardin de St Pierre, on the contrary, is a true lover of rural life."

Anecdotes of genius and virtue, but rather too well known for quotation, fill up much of his correspondence in the months of April, May, and June 1803. The "Sorrows of Werter" and the poems of André Chenier appear to have been the favourite reading of the then sentimental Beyle, who was later to be one of the heads of the most realist school of French writers.

The prosaic details of life, as in the "Diary" of a Pepys or in Swift's "Letters to Stella," come sparingly before the reader of this intimate correspondence. His mind was always soaring to the abstract, even in writing to the most intimate and familiar of his friends; but there are occasional exceptions. In one letter we are reminded of the costume of the period, in an order to send him black silk for the breeches of his dress suit. In a subsequent letter we find that his immediate circumstances were as straitened as could well be imagined in the case of an educated young man entering the world. One letter reminds one of Béranger's amusing account of the man who has only one pair of trousers, and the *tours perfides* that this one pair of small-clothes is apt to play with the wight who has no change. In the case of Beyle, it was a pair of shoes whose upper leather gave way; and he relates how it required all his ingenuity to insert a little black paste under the hole to hide it. He adds, "I owe money to the boarding-house where I dine, and where I'm not known. I also owe money to my doorkeeper and to my tailor. Long ago my watch was in pawn. I have gone nowhere for a fortnight back for want of twelve francs. I neglect M. Daru, General Michaud, and Mdle. Duchenois. What reasons for despair!"

In regard to light literature, he says that he reads a novel a month, because it moves his soul; and he recommends a list, in which I find those which were fashionable in the days of black silk breeches—"Adèle de Senanges," the works of the Abbé Prévost, &c. He adds, that "the only one to be refused to a young lady is 'Gil Blas';" but it is requisite to know it, not only from its celebrity in literature, but in order to get a knowledge of the world from the truth and the felicity of the characters, such as the Archbishop advised by Gil Blas to make no more homilies. There is nature for you!"

Study and literature thrust ideas of a military career into the background. In the summer of 1803, Beyle refused an offer to be aide-de-camp of General Michaud, "who had a superb sphere of inspection—Lisle, Dunkirk, Ostend, and Calais. It



cost me an effort to decline going with this good and great man, whom I like so much, and who has so much confidence in me."

Paris, with its art, its theatres, and its society, delighted Beyle, although he afterwards preferred Italy. The Louvre was now enriched with all the spoils of Italian galleries; but Beyle had the foible of the period for the works of French painters, such as Guérin, whose works English eyes have seldom admired, not only from an absence of chiaroscuro, but from poverty of colour, and abundance of theatrical poses and strange gestures, although undoubtedly Guérin attained eminence through his drawing, his occasionally felicitous dramatic invention, and his classical erudition. Twenty years later Beyle was an enemy of David, Guérin, and all the classics, and the sturdiest advocate of painters turning their backs on Greek and Roman story, and reproducing modern life and actuality.

But Beyle was not insensible to the defects of Parisian life, however fond of the town he might have been; and there are yearnings for the frank simplicity of those provincials who were occasionally the objects of his pleasantry, as in the following, of the spring of 1803 :—

"Why art thou not here, my good Pauline? for in that case my wishes would be satisfied. The civilisation of the great towns expels the pleasures of the heart. I have many acquaintances, but one is always in representation, and one must be clever and agreeable. Now, without simplicity there is no happiness, and nothing freezes like dignity. But one finds more good sense than elsewhere; the women are not gossips, as in the provinces; they are in the society of great men of all descriptions; they have just ideas of all things, and appreciate the 'Phèdre' of Guérin with as much zest as an ice at Frascati's: their defect is a want of feeling. There are many dry souls in the world, people who have never had in their lives a moment of unctuous sadness and tenderness, such as you and I have felt. They have two passions—vanity and love of money. We people of sensibility have an enjoyment in sadness. Passing through the Rue des Orties, so silent and narrow, I met a woman of forty, but older looking from misery, and a child. She sang a song suited to the taste of a *corps de garde*. I reflected that her song, which was of equivocal taste and morality, produced on the auditor an impression opposite to that of sympathy; the song was an extinguisher of pity. I thought to myself, 'Hèr bad morals have

reduced her to misery ;' and yet I repented at having given nothing to this poor mother."

With February 1804 came a project of marriage to a young lady of fortune ; but Beyle, whose career in subsequent years was to be a man of letters, did not think proper to avail himself of this opportunity of establishment in life, which would have allowed him to follow whatever studies he chose, without those pecuniary straits which subsequently, in 1829, brought him to the verge of suicide. On the other hand, with his wayward and inconstant nature, it is to be doubted if he could have procured domestic happiness to the lady in question ; and with regard to Beyle himself, he certainly was not a man of mercenary calculations. On three distinct occasions he could have married with pecuniary advantages, and after half-a-dozen interesting approximations, on which we shall have more to say anon, he died a bachelor. He writes in February 1804—

"I must choose a profession, and the only one that is suitable is the military career, for it is the one that causes me the smallest amount of ennui. I might render myself independent, but by placing myself under the yoke of another. This morning I had to breakfast with me a man who gave me to understand that I might have a certain young lady who has at present 300,000 francs, and who will have 500,000 ; but I do not yield to the temptation, for I should be the slave of society and all its usages. I should have a fine house, and perhaps not a hole where I could quietly read Corneille or Alfieri. Nevertheless the proposal has rather upset me. If it should be managed, I should travel four months a year.

"I have made the acquaintance of a man of four-and-thirty, who has great learning and profound sensibility of soul. I had true pleasure in conversing with him. He has just returned from Italy, where he passed seven years. We speak of Alfieri, Monti, Pindemonte, Cesarotti, &c. I feel that I love Italy with passion."

There was one species of reading that occupied and delighted Beyle more than any other, and that was the science of social, moral, and intellectual man, according to the most celebrated utilitarian masters. A generation previously, Helvetius, Volney, and St Lambert had occupied his seniors ; Destutt de Tracy was at the period of our biography the moral philosopher of the day in France ; and Jeremy Bentham was destined, chiefly through the translations, explanations, and developments of Dumont, to

acquire a European reputation as a social reformer and projector.

"Never forget," writes Beyle, "that virtue is utility to the greatest number, and education the art of training the intellect and the soul, which is the centre of the will, in such a way as to attain the maximum of utility to the greatest number. Form the habit of reflecting in this way, and you will be agreeably surprised to find yourself some day capable of understanding the greatest men, Bacon, Montesquieu, and Vauvenargues."

"The first thing a woman has to care for is her reputation; and if you shock the vanity of other women, they will punish you by defaming you."

"Philosophy is the art of being happy, therefore let us cultivate good-humour on all occasions. The morose man causes ennui to himself and others. A great source of gaiety is money, therefore let us procure it. Yesterday I had four francs in my pocket, and paid forty-four sous to see the 'Optimiste' of Colin well played."

Notwithstanding certainly very straitened finances, Beyle in the heyday of youth had no want of pleasant humour; and in these familiar letters to his sister of the year 1804, he throws off sketches of the social man of the Paris of that date with something of the neat pictorial faculty which is to be found in *La Bruyère*.

"In what is called good society there is less hypocrisy. This no doubt is owing to everybody having read Rousseau, Helvetius, Seneca, Duclos, &c., &c., and admitted that several of their principles are true.

"A man who throws himself into society renounces living for himself; he can no longer exist but for others. A man of fashion in our time rises at ten o'clock, puts on a riding-coat, goes to the bath, thence to breakfast. He then returns home, draws on a pair of top-boots, and pays visits until three, gossiping on nothings. At four o'clock he dines; he then returns home and dresses for the theatre, where he sits from seven to half-past nine; he then goes out after the first piece, draws on a pair of leather breeches, and, with silk stockings and a triple shirt ruffle, is dressed for the tea-parties, which last until midnight, remaining while amused, and leaving when surrounded by those who cause him ennui. But he propitiates the vanity of even those whom he quits, appearing to do violence to his feelings when he goes away. When ennui seizes him, he

goes at eleven o'clock to Frascati's, where people take ices, and where he finds people like himself. There are in Paris a thousand elegant young men ; they all know each other by sight, and are distinguishable by their *tournure*. How is good society recognisable ? By the art with which vanity is propitiated. The more a society has the air of being composed of intimate friends who have an admiring regard for each other, and are at the same time intelligent and unassuming, the more it distinguishes itself by good manners. In reality they neither love nor hate, but are very good sort of people, with vanity pushed to extreme, *i.e.*, being pleased or offended with the most insignificant things, but before others never betraying the smallest annoyance. Paris is ruled by mere etiquette, and not by genuine feeling. The other day I was talking of M. Rebaffit to one of the friends of this excellent man, and a man who was under great obligations to him. We spoke of mourning, and he added, ' I wore mourning a fortnight for him, according to the regulation prescribed in the *National Almanack* ! ' I was stupefied with this characteristic trait of the Parisian animal."

Such a sketch of Paris, so different in costume, hours, and manners, from the Paris of our day, is not without its interest. The extreme politeness of the ancient regime extended itself into the beginning of our century. The Frenchman of this old school, with his obsequious compliments and dancing-master airs and graces, has disappeared in the course of the political shocks of half a century. One cannot help thinking that the English coldness and nonchalance has acted rather perniciously than otherwise on the upper stratum of this gay and amiable nation.

## CHAPTER IV.

Paris in 1804—Beyle's enthusiastic Admiration of Napoleon, and his Antipathy against Louis XIV.—The Coronation Period of Napoleon I.—Engages his Sister to sketch Human Character at Grenoble—His Literary Projects and Studies.

At a subsequent stage of our work we will give Beyle's theory of the causes of laughter, the chief of which is, according to him, our sudden perception of some superiority which we possess over another person who is under our observation, and that pleasantry is the discovery of absurdity. He writes to his sister on this subject, "How I perspired to arrive at these two principles! I reflected on everything under my observation, even to my own fits of absence, so that during these reflections I remarked how I answered absurdly, so as to cause amusement, which give me more insight into the elements of laughter than the perusal of Hobbes had done."

There can be little doubt that the true cause of laughter is a disagreement between the proposition implied in a situation and the reality. The proposition implied in this situation was conversation respectfully listened to and answered, whereas the reality was conversation illogically corresponded to by an absent man. Amidst all these studies his recollections of Italian society and his longings for Italy occasionally break out. Possibly a tender reminiscence of a Milanese lady, whose baptismal name was Angela, along with the many artistic charms of this land, may have kept alive this longing to return.

"Rousseau was unfortunate all his life, because he was in search of a friend such as there have never been ten in the world from Homer's time to our own. I believe you will never have a better friend than I am, nor I a better friend than you are. When we are old we can join households, and spend eight months of the year at Paris, and four at Claix. If any chance should give me a fortune, I should buy a little country-house at Canonica, a delicious spot on the Adda, between Milan and Ber-

gamo. We could pass there from time to time a couple of months in spring : these are my remotest projects."

At no period was the scientific society of Paris more brilliant than in the genesis of the Empire. Besides the mathematicians and the naturalists were the Monges, the Berthollets, the Fouriers, and others, who had accompanied Napoleon in his Egyptian expedition. Through the Darus, Beyle was in the midst of these people, but he does not seem to have occupied himself much with the great processes of external nature. His study was the metaphysical animal man. No wonder then that the works of a Rousseau, a Destutt de Tracy, and a Cabanis occupied him more than the calculations of a Laplace, of a Lagrange, and a Legendre, or those revolutions of the globe of which a Cuvier attempted to divine the secrets, or those riches of nature which the then youthful Alexandre von Humboldt was beginning to observe, as Buffon and Jussieu had done, with the eye of the poet or seer, conjoined to the practical acuteness of the technical naturalist.\*

But history did occupy Beyle, for the chronicles of man are a chief means to study man. French and Italian history he knew well, English more superficially, German least of all. That national history of a slow, but stubborn, persevering, and consequently great race, was a sealed book to the essentially southern Henry Beyle. He was at all periods of his life a most eager reader of French history, not the early and obscure periods of the French monarchy, but the latter epochs which were associated with art and literature. On his first visit to Paris, during the Directory, and after the cessation of the anarchy of the time of the Convention, he was an admirer of Louis XIV. ; and his family having been Royalists, it was the early and natural bent of his mind. But in the year of the coronation of Napoleon (1804), his admiration of Louis the XIV. and his age had vanished. There can be no doubt that the recent and complete publication of St Simon's Memoirs, and other more recent works, had completely dissipated whatever nimbus had surrounded the monarch, who, to use a droll phrase of Beyle's, had had his nose broken with the perfuming censer. Beyle writes—

\* Lamarck, then a sexagenarian, was laying the foundations of his "Philosophie Zoologique" of 1809. A tardy joyless European recognition now, after half a century, illumines the sepulchre of him who died, like Milton, with the solitary consolation of filial affection, in blindness, poverty, and neglect.

"These days I have been studying Louis XIV., who was called the *Great* by those fellows Voltaire and Company, and meanly flattered by Boileau, Molière, and Quinault. I have been astonished by his meanness and folly. He is the great king of the simpletons, just as 'Iphigénie' is their great tragedy. The best king for people of common sense was Henri IV. Louis XIV. was a horrible dissembler; witness his arrest of Fouquet. At the death of Mazarin he robbed his inheritance of fifteen millions. Consult on this point the 'Mémoires of Choisy,' a man of intelligence, who utters unpleasant truths. Louis was, moreover, deficient in real personal courage. It is folly to believe the character which Voltaire gives of him; and, to make the matter worse, Voltaire succeeded in passing himself off as a philosophical historian."

This judgment is a rather merciless and sweeping one. But being contemporary with the period of the dazzling splendour of the beginning of the Napoleonic Empire, it has unavoidably the stamp of the time. Louis did not deserve the epithet "great" on the score of intellectual capacity, or as a benefactor of the human race, but that he rises considerably out of the crowd of kings is not to be denied. Until the War of Succession, Louis XIV. was the most powerful monarch in Europe, and such a position could not have been attained by a do-nothing king, one of those whom he contemptuously called "Les Rois Fainéants." He was not a man of letters or literary erudition, although his reign was associated with a remarkable constellation of literary talent, most of these stars having appeared on the horizon before Louis had taken the management of the affairs of state in hand. What then did Louis XIV. possess? Kingcraft, or the power of governing judiciously and fairly all the people about him, from the first dignitaries of the court and the army, to the smallest employés of the state, was what he possessed in an eminent degree. His "Réflexions sur le Métier d'un Roi" contain certainly some of the most curious and interesting experiences that have ever seen the light.

The manner and the matter of some of Beyle's subsequent works cast their shadows before them in this familiar correspondence with his beloved sister. He began as a reader of La Bruyère, Vauvenargues, Duclos, Rousseau, Champfort, and other wits and moralists, dissectors of French society. Like them he reasoned on the society which he saw—that of the Paris of 1804-5—not yet, certainly, with the acuteness, the pro-

fundity, and the Horatian pleasantry which he afterwards threw into "De l'Amour," and that brilliant picture of Italian society which he offered in "Rome, Naples, et Florence," but still in a manner sufficiently interesting to show the gradations from the crude and the juvenile to the mastery which he subsequently attained in the said works. We foreigners, dazzled by the flash of military glory that accompanied the thunderbolts of Marengo, Austerlitz, and Jena, are too apt to ignore the literary side of Parisian society during this wonderful but ephemeral show. The tribunes of political opposition were struck dumb by those whom they called the traditional crusher ("l'écraseur traditionnel"), but the French intellect never ceased its activity in literary criticism. Chateaubriand was the soul of the *Mercure*; and that part of Switzerland that spoke the French tongue had splendid representatives of critical literature in Madame de Staël and Benjamin Constant. Beyle, now very Bonapartist, admired the lady with great reserve; he did not deny her genius; but although Madame de Staël's style was not so offensive to him as the pomps of Chateaubriand, yet he was generally severe on her slight inclination to artificiality and pedantry. Beyle always had the most unbounded admiration of Benjamin Constant as a literary writer, as a public speaker, and as a man of political consistency. Certainly it is not difficult to believe that the abundance of the ideas of this writer, and the curious felicity of his style, should have charmed Beyle.

The following, written in 1804, is without a more exact date—

"Manners change every fifty years. I apply the word manners to what society considers right or not right to be done, ridiculous or in good taste. When a man's passions move him to act on his contemporaries, his first study ought to be in manners. This study is not so easy as one might suppose, for each town, each clique of society, and each individual, has the manners peculiar to itself. The road to happiness lies through a study of the manners of the age and of the highest standards of morals. The Spaniard serenades his mistress, the Italian makes parties of pleasure with the fair sex on the beautiful lakes, the Frenchman cudgels his brains to flatter the vanity of woman. But the Frenchman who would approach his lady-love in the Spanish manner would be laughed at by French society, and the Italian who paid compliments like a Frenchman would be set down by an Italian lady as a tiresome bore.



"In dramatic literature there are two things chiefly to be observed—first, the passions, *i.e.*, the effort which a man makes in attaining a thing on which he has set his soul ; second, the manners. A tragic poet can do with little knowledge of manners, if he is strong in a knowledge of the passions and of the highest moral standards. On the other hand, the comic poet, who flagellates what is ridiculous in society, can do without the passions. There is very little knowledge of the passions in 'Les Ridicules' of Molière, which was, perhaps, the most comic piece in effect in relation to the spectators before whom it was to be played ; but at the present time it is old, and Molière is recognisable only by the vigour of his traits and knowledge of stage effect, or what Alfieri called the 'sceneggiatura.'\* But if passions do not change, the mode of the actions of passions changes with the manners. Two men determined to dare all in order to marry a woman in the reign of Charles IX. would have acted quite differently from two men equally intent on this object in 1804. Hence comedies that paint manners grow stale ; tragedies that deal with passions, like the 'Orestes' of Alfieri, are immortal. The vanity of Molière's 'Femmes Savantes' will always exist, but in Molière's time it took a direction that is now quite obsolete. Fashion pushed our fine ladies, four years ago, into the lecture-rooms of celebrated chemists, but this fashion has now fallen through. The ambition that spurs the Tartuffe still exists. Now-a-days we have the Tartuffe of tender sentimentality—a part that succeeds very well, because it engages the sympathies of the female part of the community. This Tartuffe exists under the name of Géoffroy and Fievée, and perhaps Chateaubriand. Laharpe was a ridiculous Tartuffe of this sort.

"There, my dear Pauline, are four pages of philosophy written in a letter to you, instead of going into my commonplace book. I like *examples*, and not, like Montesquieu, Buffon, and Rousseau, *systems*. The first erred from want of courage, and flattered tyrants ; Buffon's foible was vanity ; Rousseau was always almost sincere.

"What are you doing? Help me to know provincial manners and passions ; describe me the manners in the drawing-room of Madame ——. I need examples and facts. Write quickly, without seeking fine phrases. The first merit even of

\* The German adjective for that skill in which a Goldoni, a Kotzebue, and a Scribe were such masters, is "bühnengerecht."

eloquence is simplicity. Contribute, therefore, to my knowledge of women, facts—facts! Give a pseudonym, such as Flavia or Superba. I have a passionate desire to know human nature, and have a great mind to live in a boarding-house, where people cannot conceal their real characters. This study has superseded my passion for declamation. Then I looked at human nature in the works of the great dramatic authors; now I study the original models. Borrow and read Sallust. You will find there thirty superb characters. Politics is the art of getting others to take the steps we desire.”

This is certainly not a bad definition of political action. The term *politics*, as usually employed, may be styled the just appreciation of the aggregates and details of forces in the struggles that spring from the passions of nations or individuals. We have little to remark on the other parts of this rather long extract. Jean Paul Richter certainly was a mole-like and subterranean Tartuffe of sentimentality. He did not apply to a sister for facts illustrative of the female character, but he kept up a large amount of confidential correspondence with sentimental females for the sole purpose of a scientific exploration of the feminine soul, to be turned to account in his novels. These ladies thought themselves in the enjoyment of the sympathy and the inmost confidence of the man of genius. Alas! it was in more than one case a cold *fiat experimentum in animo vile*.

There is in the extract some mention of Fievée and Geoffroy. Certainly the former does not make on us survivors the impression of his being a hypocrite. This printer, journalist, and negotiator was inferior in brilliancy to Rivarol, and in profundity to Mallet Dupan, but a vein of some practical sense was visible in all his speeches, acts, and writings. In the case of Geoffroy, Beyle was swayed by political passion. This clever writer was the dramatic critic of the *Journal des Débats*, and a declared enemy of the freethinkers of the eighteenth century. Colomb informs us that Beyle at this time wrote a comedy in one act, with parts cut out for Fleury and Dugazon, the object of which was to turn Geoffroy into ridicule; but the comedy itself had the following ridiculous title—“*Quelle horreur; ou, l'ami du despotisme pervertisseur de l'opinion publique.*” This production never got beyond Beyle's own portfolio.



## CHAPTER V.

Some Account of the Tender Attachments of Beyle—Rupture of Proposed Marriage—In 1805 he follows an Actress to Marseilles, and becomes a Clerk in a Counting-house there.

THE tender admirations of Beyle have been the puzzle of my biographical studies on this mysterious character. As Cuvier constructed an antediluvian animal out of the fragment of a thorax, an occiput, or a pelvis, I have attempted to embody these fugitive shadows by the aid of initials, coincidences, vague allusions in letters, and very scanty personal information culled in Milan, Grenoble, and Paris, after the lapse of considerably more than half a century, and, as I am aware, not always with the success that I should have desired.

Beyle, having the soul of an artist, was a great admirer and critic of female beauty ; and although a man of ungainly person, had felt in all their ardour those sensations of which he subsequently became the philosophic analyst in his celebrated treatise on the passion of love, so full of the results of large experience of, and deep reflection on, the ruling passion of man.

At the early age of fourteen, when a student in Grenoble, he had a first admiration of a young lady of the same age, with whose brothers he had a juvenile friendship. Beyle was a frequent sharer of the simple evening repast of the young folks, and the evenings passed delightfully in unsuspecting gaiety. But when Beyle's admiration of the sister began to reveal itself, Beyle was disagreeably surprised when, after a country walk, a bare "good evening," instead of the usual invitation to go upstairs, sent him disappointed away.

After minor attachments of his student days in Paris, came a more profound and lasting one during his residence in Milan, after the battle of Marengo, for it was then that he made the acquaintance of the beautiful "Angela." During Beyle's absence of ten years from Milan, the lady married a careless and indifferent husband ; and at the decline and fall of the Empire,

it was through the renewed acquaintance of this lady, so fascinating by her beauty and natural wit, that Beyle was chiefly induced to settle in Milan during the first years of the Restoration. This relation—for which we offer no apology—was abruptly terminated in 1817 by the discovery that her attachment to him was simulated.

In the interval between Beyle's first acquaintance with Angela, after Marengo, and the second, he had other attachments in France, and more than one opportunity of establishing himself respectably and advantageously in life. One of these cases occurs at this portion of our story. The young lady, Mdlle. Adèle de N——, resident at Auteuil, and possessor of a private fortune of several hundred thousand francs, had been beloved by Beyle, and his love had been returned. Her mother, a valetudinarian widow of intellectual tastes, approved of Beyle as her son-in-law, as he had begun to shine in society by his conversation; and besides having good social relations in Paris, had the reputation of being the son of a wealthy landed proprietor in Dauphiné. But the volatile Beyle, impatient of all restraint, disappointed mother and daughter by edging out of the connection.

The most tender of all Beyle's attachments was to a Mdlle. Viet of Grenoble, a lady of elevated character and great sensibility. This lady filled a large space in Beyle's heart from 1806 to 1810. The lady was sensible of his admiration, but her brother was opposed to the match, thinking that Beyle had not the income requisite—and that was also Beyle's own impression—so the lady married another person. We will not enter here into the subject of several marriages of convenience proposed to Beyle by other persons. What we have now stated will be sufficient to enable the reader to understand the allusions to the ladies above mentioned in the immediately following letters and others subsequent.

*(Without date, summer of 1804.)*

"MY DEAR PAULINE,—I have great need of your society here. There are moments when the mind, having a distaste for occupation, seeks objects of love and affection, and longs to be beside them. I have had the sentimental fit for several days. When the heart is cold or the mind agitated, Paris is the city of happiness; but when the tender fit comes on, I regret Grenoble, however dull it may be. How happy I should be if I were only

with you and another person to pass the evenings together, far from all the intrigues and cares of the world! Why cannot I unite around me a family such as I should like? I am afraid that we will pass our youth, which is the season of love, without our being together, and that this re-union may perhaps not be realised until we are stiff and elderly.

"I may tell you in confidence that I have recommenced lessons of declamation under a celebrated tragic actor, Larive, having been advised to do so by the medical men to cure my melancholy. I went this morning for this purpose with Martial Daru. On my return at eleven o'clock, I felt the longing to be with people I love, to speak with them, and to press them to my heart, instead of studying to arrive at new truths. I took up novels, but they seemed to me to be paltry and inflated instead of tender. I then took up the '*Nouvelle Heloise*,' but I know it by heart. Thus I have passed a day in dreaming, and I am going to the comedy to divert myself. This flood of tenderness would not be painful if I found any one to whom I might impart it. I love you, but I find here only intelligences and half souls. All the little girls here tire me out with their airs and graces, and their absence of frankness and real tenderness. All that I love is at Grenoble, or at eighty leagues from here. I can only write to *you*: the other\* has perhaps forgotten me—that is what makes me melancholy. In the midst of these dreams I have found the way to write to her, but what will she think of my letter? Does she love another? A good piece of folly crosses my brain. I mean, if I were to go incognito to the town where she is and satiate myself with seeing her. This method is romantic, but it will do no harm to anybody. How surprised she would be to see me some evening in the public garden under the trees!"

We find no record of the proposed journey during the rest of the year 1804. Beyle's circumstances appear to have been a shade better, for he records his going into new lodgings in the *ci-devant* Hôtel Ménars, in the Rue de la Loi, which he mentions as the first street in Paris, and just opposite the Rue de Ménars. The following describes his presence at the villa at Auteuil inhabited by that Adèle de N—— whom he had previously loved so tenderly, and to whom he was now so indifferent:—

"Various circumstances have removed me from the society of the people who felt with me. My excellent friend, the mother,

\* Probably Mademoiselle Viet, then at Rennes.

is a mere instrument of suffering. I cannot feel sympathy for her daughter, and I avoid speaking with her, except with my mere intellect, in order to avoid increasing what she is pleased to call her passion for me. I am afraid that I will soon be obliged to apply to this passion the greatest of all remedies—absence. Thus I will find myself in a singular position—solitary in this Paris where two years ago I saw so many people.”

Of the same family he writes later—“A consultation of physicians is held on Madame de N——. The same physicians who declared that she would never see 1805 have given her three months more—perhaps they may even cure her. On this I formed the project of going to pass a month at Grenoble, and, pleased with the idea of seeing you and the rest of the family, I wrote letters to papa and you. I then took a cabriolet, and arrived at Auteuil at six, where there was a large dinner-party. I could only mention my project to Adèle at seven o'clock, on which she went and said to her mamma, ‘M. Beyle quits us and returns to Grenoble.’ On this the mother made an exclamation, and I stepped forward and stated the thing in detail. The lady was not convinced, although I had engaged to return on the 1st of Brumaire. She said that I would not return for the winter; that it was a finished matter; that I should not be allowed to return; and that I allowed myself to be led more easily. In short, she said so much, that I came all in a hurry to Paris, not knowing whether I could get my letters back from the post, and disquieted by the effect that they would produce in Grenoble. Fortunately the porter had kept them, thinking that they would be in time enough to-morrow at midday. In this way my delicious journey has fallen through. The want of liberty paralysed everything. I should have passed six delightful weeks at Claix, instead of which, I range the fields here. The other day I went to the Forest of Montmorency; the landscape is charming, but I should have preferred Claix. I am annoyed that papa has ceased to write me, and what is worse, I shall have to write him for winter clothes, so that I have to write to him as one would to a steward for money. He promised me 250 francs a month and my clothes, and I have only 200 and no clothes; and it is painful to be in debt and at the same time on sulkly terms with papa. Nothing appears to an inhabitant of Grenoble more absurd than the expenditure of a young man in Paris.”

As for the marriage of the young lady at Auteuil, the project

of which seemed to have been in an advanced stage, it never took place. Beyle did not wish to sacrifice his freedom. Alack ! how often between 1814, when the Empire fell, and 1831, when he entered the consular service, did he regret the want of that freedom which a fixed, or, still better, an independent income, assures to the man of letters ! Truly said Scott, "Literature is a good staff, but a bad crutch."

One of the traits of Beyle's character was his desire of knowledge of all sorts. This juvenile enthusiasm for mental and moral improvement often breaks out in very odd and unexpected ways.

"Adieu ! write me soon. Yesterday, in pumps, at eleven in the evening, I walked a league to buy Destutt de Tracy. I have been seeing the 'Philinte' of Molière played by Le Fabre, and this masterpiece had so inflamed me with enthusiasm for virtue, that I read sixty pages, without a fire, without going to bed."

In speaking of the renewing of his clothing for the winter of 1804-5, he gives the anecdote of Pont de Veyle, the brother of Madame du Deffand, who, being asked what he did with such light clothing in cold weather, answered laconically, "I freeze."

"I am every day in society," writes Beyle. "Barral, to whom I lent a hundred francs last summer, has lent me a hundred francs this winter. I am handsomely clothed. Society, which used to recreate me in the midst of my studies, has become my object of study, and I have made many discoveries in the last two months. Madame de N. [the mother of the young lady at Auteuil] is enchanted with your letters ; she finds them full of natural wit and ingenuousness. Some day I will analyse this characteristic for you ; but, in the meantime, continue to send me more specimens of it. I have only sad things to tell you ; but you so candy them over with your soul, that they become charming. Endeavour to read 'Delphine' and the 'Mémoires of St Simon.' Try to please the people whom you don't like. Madame de Tencin made herself beloved by everybody, from the cobbler to the lieutenant-general who commanded the province. Men, in order to please, must flatter those who are low and tiresome. A woman needs nothing beyond that graciousness which is natural to her. The knowledge of the spirit of the laws of society in a drawing-room is much more interesting and more useful than the 'Spirit of the Laws' ["Esprit des Lois"] of society in a Roman forum ; and it requires as much intelligence to know them as to know the 'Esprit' of Helvetius.

"Society is divided into people of feeling and people of perception. People that have feeble eyes are dazzled with visions of colours in the night; this they feel so strongly, that they have not at the time the presence of mind to examine the direction or the number of these zigzags. Another person, who feels this less strongly, will observe and describe them better. Society is divided thus into people of sensation and people of perception. Young ladies and men of a romantic turn belong to the former category. To develop this would need four hundred pages.

"The natural wit [*esprit naturel*] of which I have above written to you is only appreciated in large towns. Most men have only *acquired wit*; they have a couple of hundred anecdotes, so that in a given time their wallet is soon empty. Only natural wit is agreeable in the long run, viz., that which is invented on the spur of the moment by a person of amiable character, and applied to the circumstances evolved in the course of the conversation. The high road to natural wit is to expel all vices and defects from the character, and then to say whatever occurs to one on every occasion. There is no harm in learning acquired wit—current *bon mots* and puns—in order afterwards to despise them. Ninon once consoled a father in distress about his son's ignorance. 'Your son knows nothing! so much the better—he will quote nothing,' said Ninon.

"Adieu! in recompense for those fine maxims send me a hundred crowns. You will give me the means of seeing more frequently those amiable persons who have served to trace this character, and from whom I am about to separate myself, perhaps for ever."

It no doubt was not without some effort that the wayward Beyle separated himself from the circle of Auteuil, where he found intellectual culture and a family willing to receive him into its bosom, with all corresponding material advantages. The pretty fib of a banking career is unnecessarily used to excuse his abandonment of Adèle.

"I have had the courage this year to refuse a marriage which would have made me for ever independent of the caprices of my father; but severe people would have considered it little delicate. I therefore throw myself resolutely into the banking career. I shall have five or six years of ennui and interruption of my studies. I am studying books on banking at the national library. [This is a specimen of the poetical license circumstantial.] I imagine that my father will not refuse the necessary funds. I shall have so much more merit if I become a millionaire. Give



me all details of the fifteen louis d'ors that my uncle and you have announced. *If only seven louis d'ors were ready, I should prefer this vanguard to nothing.* I was thinking of making you a *banquière*. If you marry a vulgar man, we should have a place for him in Paris; and I should put you into my bank, where you could gain ten or fifteen thousand francs a year. There are seven or eight bankers here whose wives assist them in business. Think of that. It would appear ridiculous to our simpletons in Grenoble. Madame le — used to do her own cooking without a servant; she has now ten thousand francs a year income. Hard work and ingenuity arrive at everything. Read Adam Smith in our father's library; it is, at all events, a good study. It may make your fortune. We need first an independent income, and then we can choose the means of enjoyment."

These were fine theories for a man to whom economy in his personal affairs was most difficult. Balzac, Beyle's subsequent admirer, also had endless dreams of becoming rich, and yet how hard he found it to square his budget, although his literary gains were not small!

The letters of Beyle to his sister in 1805 were interesting as specimens of his conceptions of French female education of a superior woman, such as Mdlle. Pauline Beyle appears to have been. In one of Beyle's letters to his sister, he relates that, having shown her letters to a friend of his, this friend wished to start off for Grenoble in order to marry her at once.

Beyle advised his sister to make a list of the good and bad passions, and then to write opposite each name, such as "Hypocrisy," all the characteristics appertaining to each quality of passion which had come under Pauline's observation, whether in society or in reading; and that, although method and system was in this case at first rather repugnant, yet that by perseverance she would soon find that she had discovered treasures of knowledge of human nature. Beyle admits that he had an unwritten volume of such stuff in his brain, and we may conclude that the reflections of Mdlle. Pauline were all grist to his mill. Who knows if some of the acute and refined observations of the subsequent author of "De l'Amour" were not culled from the notes of Pauline in the circle of Grenoble? Some of his images are odd and disagreeable, and remind one of the very distant resemblances of Jean Paul Richter. For instance, speaking of women, he insists on the necessity of grace, and also of a knowledge of the principles of elocution. He styles elocution, "The skin that

covers all the body. What should we think of a woman who had bones, *i.e.*, logical ideas and muscles, *i.e.*, knowledge of all the human passions, and who was without a skin? She would be frightful." Beyle looks on beauty as truth, and grace as a mode of hypocrisy, *i.e.*, something different from beauty, which is truth. Surely it is difficult to accept these definitions of the youthful philosopher; but beauty and truth have one quality in common, namely, the harmonious agreement of parts with the whole. Nor is grace hypocrisy; it is a zest or heightener of beauty; it is even in itself a mode of beauty—that of pleasing deportment.

Prudence is defined by Beyle as the art of pleasing the fools of society, *i.e.*, eighteen men out of twenty; and he advises his sister by all means to please the fools, that is to say, to be prudent. "Draw up sketches of the characters of all the people within your ken. I recommended it to you as the philosopher's stone."

One of the characteristics of Beyle in those years was a thirst for intercourse with persons of sensibility. The prosaic, bustling, ever-amusing Paris was insufficient to occupy the soul of the young man of tender longings and poetical reveries. The joys of melancholy formed the topic of a letter which he wrote to Pauline in the spring of 1805:—

"PARIS, 29 *Germinal* [19th April 1804].

"This morning I felt a want of intimate and tender enjoyment, and I have re-read your letters. They charmed me; above all, one of the 9th Messidor, in which you are more yourself than usual. It is true that next letter you thought yourself obliged to excuse yourself from the fear of being tiresome. What a vain apprehension! You are destined, my Pauline, to become an extraordinary woman. One of the parents of genius is melancholy. Great souls, that conceive celestial enjoyments on earth, are disappointed when they have no response from those whose souls are icy. Alas! the majority can neither understand nor give back such transports. In such a case, men of sensibility shed a tear of melancholy with the reflection, 'I deserved a better fate!' Regret leads people to brood on and to analyse those enjoyments of sensibility, and to become capable of painting them. Jean Jacques Rousseau, Racine, and Virgil have all walked along this road; and when a good intellect and virtue have been added to such properties, as in the cases of Homer and Corneille, they have resulted in the production of the noblest of human works.

All painters of sensibility have been inspired by melancholy : we find it in the heads of the divine Raphael, and in the landscapes of Gaspar Poussin. See the poor beggar of eighty, who gives the half of the bread to his dog. A thousand things that dry souls cannot perceive or feel make the happiness or misery of the men of tender souls. To the prosaic individual a drive in a park suggests the vanity of appearing in a fine equipage ; but to thee, Pauline, the trees suggest the lover, the husband, the spouse, or their children wandering under their welcome shade, or Sappho making the woods resound with accents of sublimity. You are happier than Adèle de N—— ; she is seventeen, and has twenty thousand francs income, but she has not your soul."

This summer of 1805 we find Beyle to be under the influence of a new passion, which was for a lively actress who had been engaged for the theatre of Marseilles ; but details are wanting as to how he first made her acquaintance, but there seems to be no doubt that she was a handsome and attractive person. Beyle carefully concealed her profession from his father, as well as all the circumstances of his relations with her, and amused the family at Grenoble with a prospect of his being a merchant and banker.

According to M. Colomb, a M. Raybaud, a small grocer of Grenoble, having his shop in the house of M. Gagnon, did a considerable amount of business at Marseilles in colonial goods. Beyle got into this Marseilles house in the capacity of clerk ; and seated on the high stool at the desk in the same town where his ladylove was performing, announced in his letters his happiness at being in a mercantile career, and his persuasion that trade was his true vocation !

In one of his letters to Pauline he writes—" Our future bank presents itself in the most smiling manner ; very probably in ten years it may give us fifteen thousand francs a year each." Elsewhere he admits that it is rather a castle in the air (*chateau en espagne*) ; but he explains that ——, who had begun as a mathematician, had calculated it all with pencil in hand. These letters of magnificent calculations were mingled with prosaic complaints that he was at his wit's end for a few louis d'ors for the most ordinary necessities.

This amour lasted nearly a year, and the passion ended by the lady marrying a Russian nobleman, whereupon the occupation of merchant appeared odious to Beyle. Hence his return for a short time to Paris, where he resumed his literary studies, which he

would have done well not to interrupt for so absurd an essay on the road to be a millionaire. As a man of letters under the Empire, Beyle could have had no existence except as a flatterer of the imperial ideas. Napoleon and his successive police ministers pensioned and protected the men of physical science, but incense to the new Divus Augustus was in the eyes of the higher police of Napoleon the proper function of literature; and it is doubtful if even the habitual Bonapartism of Beyle could have saved the wayward thinker and satirist from ultimate collision with the inferior agents and representatives of imperial power. His family, therefore, did well to give him to understand that literature, however ornamental in the case of a person of independent fortune, or however valuable in the formation of persons destined to political functions, could not be a profession for a person in the position which Beyle occupied at this time.

Again we find his friend and tutelary genius, Martial Daru, persuading him to a practical career in the commissariat. Beyle, however attached he may have been to his literary studies, yielded to the solicitations of his friend, and to a necessity still more potent. The father, who had resisted all his absurd projects to advance money for some Utopian banking scheme, was become more close-fisted than ever, and one third of Beyle's letters at this time were full of lamentations about the want of money. But the old man of Claix was immovable. He had become more than ever distrustful of the projects of his son, and therefore, fortunately for himself, Beyle had no choice but to follow out a practical career.

## CHAPTER VI.

1806—Beyle Re-enters the Public Service—Campaign of Jena—Beyle's Residence in Berlin—Impressions of Iffland and the German Theatre—Makes the acquaintance of Ancillon—Is ordered to Brunswick as Receiver of Domain Revenues—Sends Wolfenbüttel Manuscripts to the Imperial Library of Paris—Preparations for his Sister's Marriage.

BEYLE followed the French armies into Germany in the beginning of the autumn of 1806 as a subordinate commissariat officer, under the immediate orders of his relatives the Darus. Colomb erroneously represents Beyle as having been present at the battle of Jena, but Beyle distinctly states in one of his letters that the only battle he saw was that of Naumburg. The battle of Jena was fought on the 14th October, and on the 3d of November, a month after the triumphal entry of Napoleon into Berlin, Beyle writes to his sister from that capital—

“I believe, my dear friend, that we will go to Brunswick; it is said to be a fine town, with a French theatre. Here, as is natural, the theatre is German. The celebrated Iffland is one of the actors. I have seen him several times; he seems to me to have much naturalness in sentimental parts, and much naivete in comic parts. When he has a foolish thing to say, he takes care to say it as a fool should say it. He is, I believe, an author of tragedies.

“It was very cold and damp yesterday. We went to pass a review at Charlottenburg at nine o'clock, and having been running about since seven, I caught a little cold; and last night, feeling more cold, I was reminded that I was a material being. This evening, feeling the same symptoms, instead of going to dinner, I write you. I am afraid that it is my little fever of two years ago, which used to throw me every evening into such sadness. It is true that at that time I was mentally unhappy. I was at Paris, without fire, without light, without clothes, and with rent boots. Here it is different. I must have thirty or forty louis in my pocket, and I am pretty well dressed, but not quite enough. I am ill lodged and well fed. We are in a little house

opposite the Arsenal, a magnificent edifice close to the Royal Palace. We are separated from it by a little branch of the Spree, the waters of which are of a green oil colour. In all the places that are not paved one is up to the ankle in sand. I cannot understand how people have had the idea to plant a town in the middle of this sand. The town is said to have 150,000 inhabitants" (now 800,000).

Beyle was henceforth a constant frequenter of the German theatre; for this period of 1806, if that of the lowest political prostration of Germany, was the zenith of her dramatic era. Schiller had just closed with his life his series of immortal works; most of the dramas of Goethe were already before the public. In the prosaic drama and in the painting of manners, Kotzebue enjoyed a popularity attained by no other German comic author either before or since. A great school of dramatic authors brings forth corresponding actors, just as eminent opera composers call forth great singers; and the Corona Schröters, the Charlotta Akkermanns, the Ifflands, and Schröders were worthy representatives of the new German and old British standard productions; for before Kotzebue ruled the comic stage, the stock repertory in Germany consisted of adaptations of the classical English and French comedies of the eighteenth century.

All accounts represent Iffland as having been one of the most genial and natural actors that ever trod the German boards. If he is not worthy to be named, as Beyle did, as a writer of tragedies, he certainly was most effective as an author in the domestic drama, and in this line he rivalled Kotzebue in popularity at a time when "*Menschenhass und Reue*" and the "*Stricknadel*" drew tears from every audience in Germany. But, alack! from change of manners, the whole of the once popular stage repertory of Iffland, with their sanctimonious Bible quotations, is as completely interred as the contemporaneous operas of a Simon Mayer or a Ferdinand Paer. Not so those gay sparkling comedies of Kotzebue, which still, in spite of countless successors, maintain a tough hold of the stage. The man Kotzebue, from his want of principle and absence of true national German feeling, was not respected by the literary aristarchs of his native Weimar; but long will it be before "*Die Deutschen Kleinstädter*," "*Das Epigram*," and many others disappear from the effective list of German comedies.

Beyle was very theatrical at all periods of his life. He was a pupil in elocution of the celebrated actor Dugazon, who has

stereotyped his name on a category of comic parts in the French theatre.\* It was the theatre that chiefly kept Beyle at ebb in money matters during his youthful Paris residence. He cared less for tragedy, which was then magnificently sustained by Talma, Georges, and Duchênois, than for comedy and vaudeville, the interregnum between Beaumarchais and Scribe being then occupied by the gay and fertile Alexander Duval. He had not the genius of the former, but in dexterity he was the model on whom his successor, Scribe, was formed. The numerous works of the author of the libretto of "Joseph" were supported by the admirable comic actors of the day, Brunet and Potier,—then in their prime,—and in one or two pieces by Fleury, in his decline. Scarcely was Beyle settled fairly at Brunswick, to which he was transferred from Berlin, than he became the manager of a French amateur theatrical company when his duties permitted. At a subsequent period his "Racine et Shakespeare" showed that he could indicate the finest shades of the dramatic art; and even in the "Vie de Rossini," the stage knowledge aids a work which, as one of pure musical criticism, has too narrow limits. Evidently Beyle was never strong enough in German to relish the stage-humour of the Germans. In broad *vis comica* the Saxon races are perhaps superior to the Gallic, but in *finesse* of wit the French are certainly superior. Beyle himself used to say that it required four Hamburgers to club their wits together to understand the point of a French *bon mot*.

There are many miscellaneous notices of this stirring time at Berlin. Beyle mentions that Napoleon, passing in review several regiments that had not been under fire, said that they would have an opportunity "of giving the Russians a blow in the ribs: the Russians must find an Austerlitz in Prussia,"—a prediction that was not precisely verified, for Eylau and Friedland were most severely contested battles. Beyle mentions the octogenarian Mollendorf, a relic of the days of Frederick the Great, as being an object of respect on the part of the French army. Of Beyle's own interesting new acquaintances, he mentions having dined with M. Ancillon, of the French Protestant colony, then known

\* Dugazon said to Beyle, "All my pupils, on presenting themselves, are would-be Talmas. When I have stripped them of their Talma mania, I then see whether they have any original talent of their own." "Young painters see nature only with the eye of their masters and teachers," was what Beyle wrote in 1816 or 1817—an unconscious paraphrase of the old actor's speech.

as a distinguished writer, and subsequently, during so many years, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Prussia.

Beyle started for Brunswick on the 8th of November. A letter to his sister shows that the armies round Magdeburg had eaten up everything. "I write you from a wretched village called Schoeneck, on the road from Berlin to Brunswick, where we have dined on an omelette of six eggs, and a soup of beer, bread, and eggs. Yesterday we visited Potsdam and the apartments of Frederick the Great, and at Sans Souci we have seen a manuscript volume of his poetry. The man who showed us all that, was one of his hussars; he pointed out to us the time-piece given by his sister, which had been stopped at twenty-one minutes past two, the moment of his death."

Count Daru becoming administrator of the Duchy of Brunswick, Beyle had been named steward of the domains of the Emperor in that appropriated Duchy. The literary *rapin*, who had in Paris blacked his stocking in order to hide a rent in his boots, the clerk on the high stool of the grocer at Marseilles, now had a fine apartment to live in, servants and horses at his disposition, and the means to dispense a liberal hospitality to passing guests. Not always has a literary biographer such a dramatic transformation to present to his readers.

At Brunswick Beyle was so overwhelmed with the duties of his office that he had less time than previously for private correspondence; but his letters are so affectionate, and with so much admiration of his sister's qualities of intellect and soul, as to cause it to be a matter of regret that the letters of his sister are not at our disposal.

"BRUNSWICK, 22d Nov.

"I wish to write you the details of a little journey I made to Halberstadt, fourteen leagues from here, in fulfilment of a mission. Since then I have not had half a quarter of an hour to myself. I am secretary of a prefecture six times larger than that of the Isère; and besides, I have much outdoor work. It is now two o'clock, and I have been at the desk since six. I do not need your letters to dispel ennui, but because they are a *fête* for myself, and make my happiest days. I am spending a great deal of money. I have got two more coats, one of which is to be embroidered."

He continues on the 16th of December, "You are the only woman I esteem; a Portia in my eyes; all the other women are to me mere Mesdames du Chatelet, with some ideas and much



vanity, but without really sensible souls, and at the same time pursuing those pleasures of sensibility which are vaunted in the books which they peruse. Unfortunately you write so seldom, that we have only a demi-correspondence, and I am deprived of the pleasure of knowing what you do, and above all, what is passing through your mind. Have patience while undergoing the punishment to which superior minds are condemned, that of finding only ennui in the things that amuse the mass of society. The result of superiority is to be misunderstood. A domestic servant could not comprehend twenty passages of Lafontaine that please society; just as the ordinary run of society cannot enjoy passages still higher in the scale of literary ability which please the few.

"Therefore a superior mind must find in itself the sources of enjoyment. Champfort, speaking of the conditions of ordinary social conversation, says, 'People do not go to market with lingots, but with current coin.' In the ordinary commerce of life there is nothing touching or elevating. It was this enjoyment which I had in your last letter."

This first settlement at Brunswick was interrupted by a hurried visit to Paris at Christmas, in order to confer with the Minister Dejean relative to the finances and domains of the unfortunate Duchy of Brunswick. It is amusing to find Beyle at a subsequent period of his life laughing at Canova for having been employed at Paris as "*packer-up*" for the Italian princes in 1815 of the art treasures which had been culled from all Italy to adorn the Louvre. Our laughing philosopher was himself "*packer-up*" of the choicest manuscripts of the library of Wolfenbüttel, and destined as spoils of war for the Imperial Library of Paris.

He writes on Christmas Day 1806, before daylight—

"I should have started eight days ago, but the governor and the financial administrator have waited for fuller materials for my mission. All the preparations for the journey are finished. It is frightful weather, a mixture of rain, hail, and snow; it is dark as an oven, and the wind blows out the lamp of my carriage."

On the 30th of December he arrived at Strasburg, and he climbed to the top of the filagree tower at nine in the morning during a tempestuous wind.

"I have the exterior of happiness, my dear Pauline, but I will not be assured of the reality until you are married and lodged in the same house as myself. This is difficult, for our return to

France is not immediate. I came by Gottingen, Cassel, and Radstadt, where, during the changing of horses, I saw a large house in which Robergeot and Co. were lodged. But I learned nothing, as I was with people who only spoke officially with me in my uniform." This refers to the French plenipotentiaries to the Congress of Radstadt in 1799, who were murdered by banditti from political fanaticism—a matter that has never been fully cleared up.

After Beyle's return to Brunswick, where he settled for some time, he had a pleasant inclination, not amounting to a passion, towards a young lady of that town, which was suddenly interrupted by a painful illness of Beyle. This was a rheumatic fever, with swelling of the extremities and irruption of the skin. His besetting malady was a disposition towards cold in the bowels and intestinal weakness. This was usually an annual visitor during the north-east winds of March. Beyle found coldness and ennui to reign also in the female society. Poor Brunswick ladies of 1806! The blast of destiny was of the blackest and most chilling. French gaiety and politeness could do little to galvanise social existence in the pounded Duchy.

He writes on the 16th of March 1807—

"My friends were at first afraid that it was scarlet fever, and I had formed the resolution, during the forced isolation, to make great progress in German. This fever interrupting my sleep, promoted reflection, and I could not escape the conviction of the necessity in my case of extirpating all vanity from my heart. It is the great gate [*porte cochère*] of misfortune; although you are a woman, you are less exposed to it than I am. I was led by these nocturnal reflections to see the necessity of independent enjoyments, one of which is to play the piano. Si, signora, I become every day more sensible of the beauties of this art, and more disgusted with the ordinary run of men, who are too *canaille* for my taste, and give me the heartache. And you! you know how I love you, but it cannot be said that it is augmented by marks of reciprocity."

Mdlle. Pauline Beyle, born on the 22d March 1786 (obit. 7th June 1857), was three years younger than Beyle. She was now the affianced bride of M. Perier, a man of wealth and position, the proprietor of several domains, particularly Vizille, the magnificent renaissance chateau of the Duke de Lesdiguière, which had subsequently passed into the hands of the Créquy family as heirs of the Lesdiguières, and was purchased by the banker and

financier Claude Perier. Beyle thought the true basis of marriage ought to be *friendship*, not love or passion. The following letter from the future author of "De l'Amour" to his own sister on the eve of marriage is sufficiently curious for reproduction. He writes on the 24th of March 1807, and begins with an allusion to the future husband, a relative of the subsequently celebrated minister and banker, Casimir Perier. Beyle's affectionate clairvoyance had foreseen the possibility of the poetical sister receiving a shock of disappointment after marriage with a respectable and prosperous but prosaic man of business; and the following letter is for the express purpose of sparing his sister this apprehended disappointment, or, to use a Gallicism, *disillusion*.

"Perier is a good man; provincial affairs will give him the character of a financier, that is to say, he will avail himself of any little advantage to purchase a domain ten thousand francs cheaper than otherwise. But in the interior of his family he will be not the less good-natured, although less the object of attachment for an elevated soul. When love really exists in marriage, it is a conflagration which burns itself out, and becomes extinct with a rapidity proportioned to its former ardency. That is what I have seen in fifty or sixty married couples that I have had the opportunity to observe closely. What is the happiness attainable in marriage? Friendship! But here again we have difficulties, for friendship is scarcely possible, except in the case of a man of fifty who has married a widow of thirty. If they have intelligence, knowledge of the world renders them indulgent.

"In your case, happiness is to be sought in the good-natured husband whom you direct. A wife contracts for such a husband that attachment which a kind-hearted woman has for those persons who show her goodness. This directed husband renders you the mother of children whom you adore. Thus your life would be filled up, not with the impossible emotions which are found in novels and romances, but with a reasonable satisfaction. Do not expect transports of love in marriage, and remember the maxim of Scapin, 'People must expect less than nothing in order to enjoy the little that is to be found in this world.'

"I would bet a thousand to one that your husband will have a soul deficient in elevation, and an intelligence which may sometimes make you smile. Remember that your happiness will depend on his self-love not being hurt by your under-estimation of him. Marriage imposes great caution on you, for the gossip

of society might easily create unpleasantness between you. Do not let him suppose that you prefer friendship with me or with any of your female friends to his. Your soul is too elevated for coquetry. The enjoyments of souls such as ours are not only not understood, but detested, by the vulgar people that compose the bulk of society. Hide your superiority, and read alone in your closet enjoyable books, without betraying the enthusiasm which you feel. We should enjoy ourselves in solitude. When we are with friends, our thoughts should be unveiled only in proportion to their intelligence, otherwise there is the danger of our appearing to be superior, and from that moment we are lost. You, perhaps, have doubts on this subject; in four years you will recognise its truth; experience will have made you contract this painful habit.

“Meditate on this letter, and compose your mind to passing your life with a prosaic husband. Do not, on any account, remain unmarried.”

Certainly few young men twenty-four years of age could advise a sister of twenty-one with so much instinctive shrewdness, and that insight which anticipates experience. Tender brotherly love prompted this curious letter, which, from its confidential character and the youth of the writer, disarms criticism. But one cannot help asking if it is possible for two people to live under the same roof as man and wife, and succeed in concealing their foibles or strong points? or whether the laws of delicacy require the art and ingenuity here inculcated?

## CHAPTER VII.

Brunswick in 1807-8—Beyle Studies German—Berthier Visits Brunswick—Hunting-party at Salzdahlum—Pecuniary Difficulties of Beyle, senior—Youthful Recollections and Tender Attachments.

IN spite of monotonous official employment, we see at this period the mind of Beyle to be active, eager, and curious in imbibing all sorts of knowledge. Expression in men and animals was one of the subjects that occupied him. He studied the agonies of a dying crow, and compared it with prints from Raphael Mengs, illustrative of expression. Returning home, he finds several books of history and travels. In a sort of boyish glee he writes, "The brain is a magic-lantern, at which one can always play for one's own amusement."

Conscious of the advantage of residence in a German town, his leisure was devoted to the study of the language at a time when it had emerged into European celebrity by so many productions of men of genius, most of whom were then alive. He read through Bürger's "Lenore" with his master, and was quite taken with that thrilling production of the romantic school. He gives his sister a correct analysis of the poem, and adds, that "the English are fanatical admirers of it, so that there are several translations of it into that language."

Of the exquisite elegaic vein of Bürger there is a disappointing absence of mention. Tenderness, the divine spirit of true poetry, has flitted past many stately structures of poets of renown, but was an abiding tenant of the lowly dwelling of the author of the undying "Odes to Molly." In the accents that pierce from soul to soul, what German poet has surpassed the singer of the "Dove that left her home?"

Notwithstanding the pleasures of literature, Beyle got tired of Brunswick, and wished to go to the active army. But his request, addressed to M. Daru, was not complied with. He writes home, on the 12th of May 1807, that he had received no pay since January; but perhaps this was a little poetical license to

stimulate the paternal liberality. On the 28th of May he writes, content to remain at Brunswick, with the idea that his progress in German will be rapid. He also continued to work at his Essays on the Sentiments. The readers of the usual biographies of Beyle naturally suppose that his works were written in the years immediately preceding their publication. But he appears to have had a vast treasure of manuscript matter stored up at this earlier period for future employment.

He found the conversation of the people of Brunswick to be so dry as to give him "*une indigestion de sécheresse.*" He was pleased to have so much occupation, which made his pecuniary position to be so much better than what it formerly was. But when these official occupations became so absorbing as to put a complete stop to his literary ones, he got out of humour, and poured out his maledictions on "the horribly gaping jaws of a portfolio in which my happiness is to be engulfed for the day." He laughed at those who sought to gratify incompatible desires ; but it was his own case. On the subject of people knowing what they want, he writes on the 3d of June—

"I ask myself, What do I want? Champfort gave as one of the causes of the success of the Duc de Richelieu, that he knew what he wanted. What do you want?" Beyle asks his sister. "I could bet that if the Almighty was to enter your room, and ask, What do you want? that you would be puzzled to answer, except by a general wish to be happy. Reflect on this, and write me what in such a case you would say to the Deity."

There is a cold blast of Swift and Rousseau in the following:—

"I possess here those material advantages to the want of which I used to attribute my ennui and low spirits, and yet the ennui continues. It is contempt for the human race that has plunged me into this state. Do not repeat my words, or betray my secret. But you have no idea how tormenting the feeling is ; it affects the enjoyment of works of art. I have a sincere contempt for Racine. I feel all the low things he did at the court of Louis XIV. Court habits deprive a man of the faculty of feeling what is truly great." He then adds in English, "Demand some money to my dear father."

But the dear father was far from being in prosperous circumstances. Beyle had now a career and an income, and, moreover, was not an only son. It is clear, therefore, that the old man thought that Beyle, now afloat, should swim by his own force. The father was in the hands of money-lenders, and there was a

question of selling Claix as a measure of prudence. This greatly displeased Beyle, because he loved the place, and thought that being the son of a proprietor gave him a status in society, whether in a question of marriage or of official promotion. Even in the case of his not marrying Mdle. Viet, of whom he had a frequently recurring and tender remembrance, he hoped that, if he made his fortune, he would lead an errant life, like one of his cousins, who spent his summer amid the Alps of Dauphiné, and his winters in Rome, Paris, or Naples. In everything regarding money matters and means of existence, Beyle was, like many other men of letters, in pursuit of an idea quite Utopian. "Five or six favourable chances in succession will bring me to this point, and then we may go to the end of the world."

On the 11th July 1807, the Emperor named Beyle an Assistant-commissary (Adjoint Commissaire des Guerres). On the 26th July, Marshal Berthier, Prince of Neufchâtel, Minister of War at that time, paid a visit to Brunswick.

"I am listening every moment to hear the guns fire. My hat and sword are on the table, my two horses are stamping the ground with their hoofs in the courtyard, impatient for the arrival of the Prince of Neufchâtel, who is expected at seven o'clock by all the staff. Comedy at nine, followed by an assembly at the governor's, and illuminations. While everybody is running and in agitation, I am perusing 'Goldoni,' a fine copy of sixteen volumes in octavo, which has been lent me here. None of his comedies are equal to Molière's, but they are almost all full of naturalness. They moreover have another charm for me, as they recall the manners and the language of my dear Italy, the country of sensibility."

Certainly Molière stands much higher than Goldoni in literary value, but whether from having painted manners more modern than those of the age of Louis XIV., or from stage knowledge, the sum of amusement derivable from Goldoni actually put upon the stage is certainly much more than from the performances of the comedies of Molière.

The correspondence does not introduce us to the person of Berthier, who is above announced with so much pride, pomp, and circumstance. Beyle writes further on, "I do not know what my destiny is to be. The cold Germans begin to give me ennui. I should like to be employed ten leagues from Paris, or a thousand. At a thousand leagues off, I should have the right to be employed at Paris itself."

Beyle visited the celebrated Brocken, in the Hartz ; but thirty letters to write a day and commissariat convoys of all sorts, rendered it impossible to give his grandfather a more minute account of his journey.

Another interesting official excursion, in his capacity of inspector of the domains of Brunswick, was to Salzdahlum, the Versailles of the Duchy of Brunswick, one of the most extensive and princely residences in Northern Germany, to judge by the prints of it in all the great German collections. But in the glades of the forest, and surrounded by the stag-hunters, his thoughts were with his present love, no longer the Adèle de N—— of Auteuil, nor the fascinating actress of Marseilles, nor the absent Angela of Milan, but Mdle. Viet of Grenoble. He writes on the 2d September 1807, at four o'clock in the morning—

“Write me much about that charming V——. I believe that you are right, and that she has a rare soul. I loved her tenderly, and yet I have seen her only seven times in my life. All my other *passioncelle* have been a mere reflection of that one. You can easily understand why the smallest details about V—— interest me. Does she love her brother as much as you say ? He is one of the driest persons that I know, and made for the so-called fine society of this age.

“These sweet thoughts of the V——, which in my soul take precedence of almost all my chagrins, have come to me in the midst of grand forests, fresh with the morning dew, and surrounded by eight hunting friends intent on stag-slaughter, and in whose company I must not forget to be amiable for a single instant. My official superior has taken permission to hunt, and indulgently feigns not to see any of my own escapades.

“I will be thinking of you both all the day. I am inclined to say, that when you are together, my spirit will be in the midst of you. What a happiness if the foolish vanities that separate us allowed us to pass a day in the vast solitude of thick umbrageous woods ! This might be possible in forests around the Grande Chartreuse ; but the laws of convenience and the gossip of the Grande Rue of Grenoble would say No. I yesterday killed a partridge for the first time in my life, but it did not give me the thousandth part of the pleasure that I had when I killed a snipe in the environs of Doyatière” (Grenoble).

Beyle enjoyed woods, exercise, and fresh air, but there are no signs of his having had the passion of the chase. Even in after life, when ennui and capital shooting in the neighbourhood of



Civita Vecchia almost made him a sportsman in spite of himself, he hunted more willingly for medals, bronzes, busts, and cameos, than for hare, woodcock, or partridge. The great and universal human chase after happiness, whether in the breast of the statesman lusting after power, the money-getter in his counting-house with golden visions, or the tender lover sighing after the mistress athwart hindrances, were the preferable occupations of the subject of our biography.

Beyle was again disturbed by the "skeleton in the closet"—the pecuniary difficulties of his father, who had done much to embellish and to improve Claix, but who was so straitened by debt that there was again a probability of its having to be sold. This upset Beyle; for his dreams of marrying Mdlle. Viet depended partly on his being the son of a landed proprietor, and his projects in after-life were to retire thither when all his campaigning was done. He therefore wishes his sister to look into the labyrinth of debtor and creditor. He writes on the 20th of September from Brunswick—

"All my possible resources of happiness are in the water if my father does not preserve Claix. In the eyes of the parents of my *belle* it is a good country estate; but without it I am a little employé without a sous. My present position is this: There is every appearance that M. Daru will pass the winter in Germany, and so will I; but I should prefer to quit the good but tiresome Brunswickers. In letters I am studying German by main force, and in venery I am at my third partridge. When the passions one has cannot be satisfied, new passions must be created. This principle is a true one, but difficult to follow out. There! I have tumbled into philosophy, and I see you beginning to yawn in spite of the three hundred leagues that separate us."

In October 1807 he sent his sister the principal works of Mozart, with remarks on the sensibility of the great master and his power of expressing anguish. Beyle adds, "Music consoles me for many things. A little air of Cimarosa, which I hum with a false voice, relieves me from the ennui of two hours of scribbling. I play piquet almost every evening with my cousin and M. la Saulsaye, my Commissary-general, an amiable man, who was well acquainted with Collet, Crébillon fils, Rhulière, and others."

With the war in Russia and Poland at an end, and with the temporary peace patched up at Tilsit, with strong, even overwhelming, garrisons in Northern Germany, there came the period of the

greatest humiliation of the populations. Such enormous garrisons had to be maintained by the people with silent inward groans, which the French bore very philosophically, for entertainments and vaudevilles were the order of the day at Brunswick, after the fighting was all finished. In December, Beyle again reproaches his sister with scant correspondence. "It is making us be dead for each other sooner than is necessary." He continues to work at his philosophical studies, but admits that his philosophy is at fault when he has a fit of jealousy of another commissariat officer getting on more rapidly than himself.

*"3d December 1807.*

"I was all last evening the manager of the amateur comedy. I amused myself very well, and I am quite gay with my dramatic essays. We rehearsed 'Dupuis' and 'Des Rouais' and 'La Vérité dans le Vin,' a lively and natural picture of the manners of that time. Marianne, without being a beauty, was not amiss. A pretty woman coming into the society of a group of men spreads a brilliant varnish over all their qualities. I had yesterday three men of wit among my actors—my cousin, M. la Saulsaye, Commissary-general, and a M. Brichard; we laughed until midnight."

Memoirs of Gregory VII., Koch's "Revolutions," Voltaire, Ancillon, and Condorcet were his reading at this time; and he hoped that, by the aid of these books, illustrating men swayed with passions and prejudices so different from each other, to acquire important additions to his historical knowledge.

"I do not know why the Middle Ages are associated in my mind with Germany. The peasants of the country around Brunswick have preserved to this day the exact costume of the time of Charlemagne. The North, which puts me in bad humour in spring and autumn, touches me when in the snowy dress of winter. I enjoy a Gothic church in the snow surrounded by withered trees. I have one of that sort in my neighbourhood. This comes of my having passed the morning with Hildebrand and the Emperor Frederick in the courts of the Castle of Canossa."

It appears that the mental superiority of Mdlle. Pauline Beyle was also accompanied by some of the eccentricity and mental singularity of the brother. This lady had been in the habit of occasionally going out in male costume, but Beyle highly disapproved of this. On receiving the news of his sister's marriage

Beyle at once expressed his satisfaction in a letter to M. Perier, the brother-in-law, in which the explanation of the young lady's recent eccentricities is edged in with curious felicity.

“BRUNSWICK, 24th January 1808.

“Your letter, my dear Perier, has given me the most lively satisfaction. You know that I chose you beforehand for my sister; my only present desire is to see the matter terminated as soon as possible, for you know the proverb about reported marriages. What are the pecuniary arrangements with my father? and where do you mean to reside? I do not know a more reasonable being than my sister, and I am convinced that you will be the happiest of husbands. She was full of ennui at home, like all of us before we are allowed our liberty of locomotion. When people imagine extreme happiness to be in an unknown state, there may come wildish fancies which a reasonable liberty is sure to correct. Except in this matter, I believe her to be the best woman possible, and you ought to be happy if anybody is entitled to be so.

“I should prefer Brunswick if it were situated four or five degrees farther south. This eternal humidity makes me ill; my next destination may be Dalmatia or Portugal.”

Various other letters of Beyle during the spring give us glimpses of his social existence in Brunswick. True intimacy, amusement, enjoyment, and confidence was, as might be expected, only attainable in the society of his military and civil French compatriots, with their small attendant number of ladies, who were of course highly appreciated. With the Brunswickers there was only the hospitality dictated by prudence or fear. He writes on the 24th March—

“I was yesterday invited to the most noble society of the town. Ten card-tables, a faro-table, and a Schneider. Seven or eight little girls were there, to whom I paid exaggerated compliments, otherwise I should not be understood; but it must be admitted that these people are so on the *qui vive* with us, that all naturalness, and consequently all pleasure, is banished.” Indeed, without this last candid confession, Beyle would have laid himself open to the reproach of that conscious superiority and self-esteem with which he subsequently so unmercifully flagellated his own countrymen. With all his studies of human nature, he does not seem to be aware that, with the omission of these hyperbolical gallantries, he would have stood higher in

the opinion of the North German ladies. The following extract appears to me to have all that naturalness which was wanting to his social relations with the poor timid young ladies of Brunswick ; it is addressed to Pauline on the 26th of March.

“ With a thousand things to do, and a thousand duties to fulfil, you will scarcely have time to read my letter ; but I have nevertheless pleasure in writing you. It appears to me that in souls of sensibility there is a connection between musical airs and situations that have been created by affection. With those tender and connecting reminiscences, one is whole days humming airs of association to one’s-self. Such is the history of my day while humming to myself the words ‘ *Cara sorella*,’ adapted from the ‘ *Cara sposa* ’ of the ‘ *Matrimonio Segreto*.’ Humming thus, I have passed in review all the time we lived together—how I did not love you when we were young—how I once beat you in the kitchen of Claix—how I took refuge in papa’s library—and how he came furiously in on me, with ‘ Wretched child ! I will eat you ; ’ all that we suffered from that Satan, Seraphine [their aunt] ; then our walks on the St Joseph’s road between the stagnant waters, and how at summer’s twilight I cast my eyes with a sigh to the mountains beyond Voreppe, with their soft orange tints.”

Advancing in his tender autobiography from childhood to the age of lover’s sighs, he felt the supreme happiness of attachment to Adèle de N—— of Auteuil and Angela of Milan ; but he admits that in the case of subsequent attachments, there was no longer a question of those juvenile raptures.

“ Even the recollection of them is stronger than any present happiness which I can procure myself. These are my reveries, my dear friend. I am almost ashamed of them, and you are the only person in the world to whom I dare confess them. I perceive one thing clearly, which is rather saddening : when we lose a passion, we lose all those associations which gave us so much pleasure during its existence. I have related to you that, being at the fireworks at Frascati, at the moment of the explosion Adèle leant a moment on my shoulder. I cannot express the happiness I then felt.”

In the case of Angela of Milan, he mentions that when he reads a fine passage of Italian poetry, he seems to hear her declaiming to his heart’s delight ; from which we must conclude that Angela had, besides a beautiful person, a fine voice and a noble elocution.

At the end of May 1808, Beyle visited the thirteen hundred feet deep coal-mines of Dorothea, in the Hartz, after which he was presented to King Jerome, who had arrived in the neighbourhood, and Beyle was delighted to find in a nobleman in the suite of the King one of those choice spirits and sympathetic souls with whom he could converse on the fair sex, Italy, music, war, and ambition. "If we had to act together we should soon be friends; at present, we are agreeable acquaintances."

The post of steward of the domains of the Emperor at Brunswick had altogether many material advantages, which Beyle could not conceal from himself when, in the intimacy with his sister, he chose to indulge in a retrospect of his needy existence at Paris compared with his position in Germany, which was that of a bureaucratic bigwig, and in his catalogue of the details we are slightly reminded of the ostentation of Don Magnifico in the "Cenerentola."

"Four years ago I was at Paris with a single pair of boots with holes in them, without fire in the midst of winter, and often without a candle. Here I am a personage. I receive many letters in which the Germans address me Monseigneur; the great French personages call me M. l'Intendant, and arriving generals pay me visits. I receive petitions; I write official letters; I get angry with my secretaries; go to ceremonial dinners; mount on horseback; and read Shakespeare: but I was more happy in Paris. If one could place one's existence where one chose, like a pawn on a chessboard, I should still go and learn declamation from Dugazon. I should go and see Melanie,\* with whom I was in love, in a shabby coat, to my great internal displeasure: when she did not choose to receive me, I used to go and read at a library. At night I used to walk about the Tuileries envying the happy; but how many delicious moments there were in this unhappy existence! I roamed in the desert, but from time to time I came upon a well.

"I am now seated at a copious table, but appetite fails me. This monotony, however, may change, for it is supposed that we shall soon have to punish Austria for all her insolences. I have

\* Notwithstanding every desire on the part of the family of Beyle to aid me in my researches, there has been, after the lapse of seventy years, no possibility of making out who this "Melanie" was. On various much more recent matters connected with Beyle, M. Francis Wey, one of the most distinguished of French archivists and men of letters, writes me, "*Les témoins de cette vie sont devenus bien rares.*"

no wish for war, but once in it, one can say that events never repeat themselves, and that it brings incessant novelty of life. I begin to perceive that it is only on condition of changing aspects that three-fourths of men and things are supportable." (And then in English), "The *warr* is sure."

In June we find Beyle giving his sister advice as to her family circle; he is decidedly in favour of gaiety and against provincial seriousness. "In the provinces, if a man is gay, society *gendarmes* him for showing off his wit." Beyle finds the frivolous people of Paris more reasonable. "If people enjoy a pleasant laugh, it does not much signify if the laugh has been caused by what is foolish or by what is intelligent." Beyle is a decided enemy of the *bureaux d'esprit* of the Madame de Staël sort. "Witness the life that M. Helvetius led at Auteuil with the amiable Cabanis, who died lately, and with many others. No pedantry, no wit office; it was simply people whose conversation suited each other, and who found happiness with little trouble."

Beyle is pleased to read in the *Moniteur* an announcement of a new edition of the works of Beaumarchais, "this man who was so courageous and so gay." Beyle cannot bear one of Beaumarchais' contemporaries, the pedant Laharpe, but he was tickled with one profound and pleasant expression of the said illustrious pedagogue and celebrated critic: "Whoever is happy, or appears to be so, must be always on his knees to beg pardon of society for his felicity, and even does not always obtain it at the price of this humiliation."

Then comes the moral addressed to Pauline, marrying so advantageously. "Remember that every young girl of Grenoble, unless possessed of a superior soul, would be charmed if some mortification happened to you, and that you would be overwhelmed with perfidious pity from all quarters. This has caused me apprehension since I have heard of certain [in English] *walks with dresses of man*. I should have been less anxious had you seen three battles.

"Will you have the perseverance to plant a pretty English garden (without bridges, grottos, and other expensive and paltry devices) in the first or second year of your marriage? Will you be able to say at the end of the month what your housekeeping has cost you?

"Will you have the forethought to travel a little before you have children?"

We do not know how she took the hint to keep her hus-

band's household accounts in order. Perhaps she thought that, however well meant, example would have been better than precept on the part of the amiable but wayward and most uneconomical brother. He ends with recommending a trip to Paris; and we learn that Beyle, with all his relish for art, had not as yet seen the Gobelins, which he promised himself to see in her company. He was afterwards, no doubt, most familiar with the resources of this establishment when he came to be one of the controlling inspectors of the buildings and furniture for the crown. One of his curious requests to his sister was to have his "illustrious name" effaced from all the neighbourhood of the Grande Chartreuse, where it had been inscribed by him in the gay exuberance of youth; but the beautiful Mdle. Viet had found a mocking amusement in the freak, to the annoyance of Beyle.

The joy of a brother breaks out at the marriage—"You see there was no reason to be so apprehensive. I admit that the moment of the epithalamic chant was embarrassing; but the account of this day in the letter of our grandfather gave me the most lively pleasure when I read it. This is one of the great affairs of my life brought into port. Economise in jewellery or follies in order to see Paris and Milan. I start with joy like a child when I think of the address I have to put on this letter. Plant an English garden the first year of your marriage; in fifteen years you will walk under its shade with your children."

The slightest, and apparently the most prosaic, incidents set Beyle into a tender reverie or philosophic discussion. A barrel-organ playing a particular air brings tears into his eyes, for it reminds him of Italy, of Cimarosa, and of his Angela. He recalled with pleasure his hearing the "*Matrimonio Segreto*" at Novara, just before the battle of Marengo. This music delighted him as expressive of love. Now, Cimarosa certainly had a tender side, but, as a colourist of love, not to be named with Mozart, Schubert, and Bellini. Beyle had that vast fund of sensibility that must expend itself on an object—a Milanese Angela, an Adèle of Auteuil, a Mdle. Viet of Grenoble, a Cimarosa, and Paisiello, when there was not as yet a Rossini, an ode of André Chénier, or the mellifluous verse of a Tasso, and, alternating with those enjoyments of sensibility the intellectual gymnastic of the analysis of those very vehicles of enjoyment. "The arts which please us, by painting the passions, so to speak, by reflection, like the solar moon, may give us enjoyments more strong than the passions themselves," is the reflection he makes at Brunswick

on the 29th of October 1808, in comparing his extinct passion for Adèle with his present enjoyment of art and literature, and his hopes of peaceably residing some day in Italy, far from the turmoil of war and politics, and enjoying this land of delights. That a passion for the arts is more permanent than one for an *inamorata* is certainly true, but how much less vivid! The longing for Italy and Italian life pursued him through all his Northern sojourns. That he was not at home at Brunswick, in consequence of national and political coldness freezing all social relations, may be easily imagined by the reader.

"I am every day surprised to observe how little pleasure I derive from the society of German women. French women cause me ennui. I place my happiness of this sort in Italy. If chance gave me forty thousand francs a year, I should go to Italy. It is possible that at the end of a year those beautiful Roman and lively Venetian ladies would be as indifferent to me as those German ladies here, who have the most beautiful complexions. But in arts there are constantly new sensations. Who will say that we may not have a composer of Italian operas superior to Cimarosa? That part of our soul which is pleased by Fleury in the 'Ecole des Bourgeois,' by Dugazon in 'Bernardille,' by the 'St Cecilia' of Raphael, and the 'Deh! signora' of the 'Matrimonio Segreto,' is an inexhaustible source of pleasure. This happiness is stronger than that given by the passions. If this is correct, I am nearer happiness than I supposed myself to be when under the influence of ambition, or the love which gave me such moments as those which I had at Frascati."

This last is an allusion to Mdle. Adèle de N—— of Auteuil leaning on his shoulder at the fireworks, which he in more than one letter describes as one of the rapturous moments of his existence. That the arts confer enjoyment more unmixed with pain and uneasiness than any passion, whether love, ambition, or any other, is certain. The admirer of the arts is a volunteer—he possesses himself; the enthralled by a passion is a bondsman who has not his liberty. But what exquisite moments in the bondage!

The proposed marriage with Mdle. Viet ended like the similar project of a union with Adèle de N—— of Auteuil. When the announcement of the marriage of the latter with another person came to the knowledge of Beyle, the sympathy with and esteem for this young lady was unequivocally expressed to his sister.

"I have twenty times read the letter, my charming friend. I



thought at one time all could be arranged. I am far from being rich enough for marriage. I could not bear the idea of my wife not living in Paris in the same society as myself ; and, to attain that, I should need at least twenty thousand francs a year. I must, therefore, live as a bachelor ; I see that quite clearly.

“So she is to be married ! When and with whom ? [in English]. I did think that her brother had injured me in her opinion ; and, in an explanation which we had about a year ago, that, after what had passed, we could no longer be so intimate as previously.

“And yet, although I may have conducted myself as a lover, or as an imprudent man, which is somewhat similar, nevertheless I have always acted as a very honest man. Try to discover the thoughts of Mdlle. Viet on this matter. I should be hurt if she thought me to blame ; but, I repeat, nothing must be done to stop the ensuing marriage.

“I should be mad to think of marriage. You must admit, however, that this young lady is a very fine character, and very different from those insignificant dolls that garnish drawing-rooms. You know how precious are her smallest words to me, and that a single phrase paints the sentiment which has dictated it. Tell me, then, exactly what she says of me.”

The wayward Beyle lived and died a bachelor. Three times he was on the way to marriage, as will appear by our narrative, without counting more than one attempt on the part of his friends to bring about arranged marriages of convenience when he had reached, or rather passed, middle age, and which ended with the same abortive results as those in which his own affections had been warmly engaged.

## CHAPTER VIII.

1809—Campaign against Austria—Goes by Strasburg to Bavaria—Impressions of an Army on its March—Nocturnal Adventures—French Army enters Austria.

TIRED of Brunswick, and full of avidity for new sensations, Beyle went to Paris early in the year 1809, and got attached once more to Count Daru as an "Adjoint Commissaire des Guerres" in the campaign about to be undertaken against Austria, with the usual groundless pretexts, by the spoiled child of fortune, whose brows were to receive their last laurels, and with them the hand of a daughter of the Cæsars. Victories were in store for him even later than 1809 ; but campaigns with victorious results were no more to flatter the most measureless of human ambitions.

The road to Vienna lay through Strasburg ; but his self-love was not flattered by one of the ladies of the Paris society who accompanied the expedition systematically bestowing her conversation on persons Beyle thought inferior to him. "She looked at me as if I was a barrel of powder," writes Beyle, who, notwithstanding his most unpoetical personal appearance, had those powers of conversation which often charmed both beauty and distinguished birth. This affair was so much the worse as the lady appears to have been a person of importance, who might have something to say in the matter of promotion ; and this coldness was continued during the advance of the army, so that he wrote, "I am in the enjoyment of complete disgrace ; everybody is spoken to but myself."

On the 16th of April, the army was on the road from Donauverth to Augsburg, and the first spurs of the Bavarian Alps were soon visible. This gave Beyle a moment of joyousness, for behind the Alps was Italy. "Calculating people, like William III., have never such moments," writes Beyle ; a remark with which we cannot quite agree. Taciturn men do not give enthusiastic utterance to their joys, but have them like other mortals.

As a specimen of the way in which Beyle passed his time while campaigning, we give some notices of his march across Bavaria; the real roughing which he went through was three years later, when on the retreat from Moscow.

On the 27th April, Beyle, in the suite of Daru, passed Landshut, on the Isar, below Munich, and then, with seventeen commissariat officers, pushed on towards the Austrian frontier. The road was covered with two lines of ammunition waggons, and as defiles had sometimes to be passed, the two lines had to be reduced to one. This gave Beyle the opportunity to enjoy the successive landscapes, which he found to be charming, as is the case with all those northerly slopes of the Bavarian and Austrian Alps; the army having just passed the extensive tableland of the Upper Danube (*Die Baierische Hochebene*), which is one of the most monotonous plains in Europe. In this new region farther east there were gentle undulations, thickly wooded heights, and scattered trees below. Beyle remarked the confusion and disorder which war had produced in places where the advance of the French had been resisted—the ground covered with muskets, shoes, and fragments of clothing, wheels, and litters. Endless cartridge-papers were scattered in all directions; and the recent bivouacs were represented by hastily improvised huts, got up with sticks and straw. When the valley was straight, and he could look a league ahead, he distinguished athwart the stifling dust the glistening squadrons of cuirassiers, who, being mounted, were not obliged to hug the causeway, but kept on the fields, and gaily leaped the ditches in their way, leaving artillery and baggage to occupy the beaten road. Officers' carriages also occupied the one road; but these vehicles were unpopular with the soldiers, so they had great difficulties thrown in their way, oaths and threats of the black-hole being sometimes applied to the drivers. They arrived at evening at Neumarkt, a town of two thousand inhabitants, which had to lodge forty thousand French soldiers, who had not dined, and who were in that state of non-discipline which hunger is sure to produce; men in this humour, after a long and fatiguing march, to use an expression of Beyle in his private journal of this day, which we are condensing, are reckless of every living being (*"Se fichent de tout ce qui existe"*). From ten o'clock they looked out for lodgings, and Beyle cut slices off a round of beef which he had brought from Landshut. He then went to sleep, a black dog reposing on his feet.

Towards morning an Austrian deserter, whom he had taken for

a servant, brought him slices of beef fried and covered with a large crystal-looking salt. Beyle saw the day was dawning, and opening the shutter, saw General P—— reposing on straw on the top of a waggon. Beyle asked where he was going. The General answered to his brigade, and he was in despair at the idea of not arriving in time. Beyle said that, for a man in despair, beef-eating was not a bad remedy. The General also seemed to be of that opinion; so he entered, and, as Beyle writes, “ate like a robber, declaring the beef to be tender.” On the day’s march signs of greater disorder were visible, because the fighting had been more recent. The night’s station was Alt Oeting, where they found the Imperial Guard, with two generals and fifty grenadiers, around the poor devil who was village foreman (*Obmann*), who could only say, “Moi pas comprendre le Français.” The generals wished to have the best lodging, but Beyle maintained that the best rooms were the right of *le patron*, i.e., the Commissary-general Daru; so, after a sharp discussion, the generals gave up the point; and Beyle, not finding his comrades at M. Daru’s large inn, appropriated a billet without ceremony, and arrived at No. 36.

The billet was outside the town, being the house of a Bavarian Countess, surrounded by six children, the eldest, a girl of seventeen, not very pretty, but handsomely formed, and with a fresh complexion; both she and her mamma spoke French. The children had fine eyes; so Beyle assumed the gentle tone, and, with his best German phrases, found himself a favourite after half an hour. Having retired to his room to read Moore’s “Travels in Germany” in order to divert his mind, the Countess and her six children suddenly broke into the room with, “Monsieur, the Austrians have arrived! One of my farmers has just told me this, and I have thought it my duty to let you know.” Beyle then asked if the town had a ditch, to which the Countess gave a negative answer, adding, that her house was outside the town, and that if Beyle chose to ascend a turret, he would see the Austrians. Even the young lady, Mdle. Rosina, added kindly, “The battalion in the place may be repulsed, and you will be made prisoner.”

Beyle declares that his mind was more occupied with the amiability of the young lady than with the approach of the Imperialists. So they ascended the tower, and the narrow windows having no balcony, Beyle had to hold the children from tumbling down. On looking out, they saw the heads of five or six regiments of

cavalry debouching from the woods, the men wearing grey mantles; but on looking closer, Beyle perceived that they were French cuirassiers, who had their white mantles on, as it was raining; so Beyle, with the Countess and troop of children, went all downstairs again.

A multitude of other people now came to lodge at the house, who made an amount of noise that was most disagreeable. Beyle went to sup with Count Daru at his lodgings; and the Bavarian Countess made him promise to come back, so as to keep the noisy new-comers in a little order, for the house was now beset by the whole of the post-office of the army. But at eleven o'clock, after supper, Daru despatched Beyle to Burg-hausen, to make a communication to a person whom we suppose to have been Berthier, Prince of Neufchâtel, and Quartermaster-general. But then came the difficulties. His horses had disappeared; the Austrian deserter, who was his servant, was not to be found. It was eleven o'clock at night, the rain poured in torrents, and no lights were to be seen but those of the distant bivouacs, with the shadows that flitted across their fires. Beyle had been praising the beauty of Mdle. Rosina, but his comrades had assured him that the young lady of billet 37 was much handsomer than the lady of 36. But, in the midst of this conversation, Beyle was reminded that he must not play the sybarite, but seek horses in a town where he knew nobody, and where no door would be opened to him, and that nevertheless depart he must.

So here was Beyle at midnight beating round the town, telling the people that he had a mission that must be executed, but everywhere the same answer, "No horses." At last he thought of an expedient, and he told the people that if he did not get horses all the troops would be without provisions next day. This caused a group of soldiers to begin to reason among themselves, so they took him to a place where there were four stout horses. The helpers of the post were then turned out in the drenching rain, and the horses brought to the door of the Bavarian Countess at No. 36, where a newly-arrived colonel had actually taken possession of the bed of the lady of the house. But the Bavarian family took it gaily; and as there was no question of sleeping for that night, they turned the adventure into an improvised evening party, with dance and song so near the scenes where cannon roared and death had stalked around.

Coffee was served with yolks of eggs, and Beyle and his com-

panions started at three in the morning, and fell into a deep sleep until the broad daylight, and they awoke as the carriage was going down the rapid descent to the bank of the Salza, which had come boiling and tumbling out of the Alps. Here was the limit of the Bavarian and the beginning of the Austrian territory, but the Austrians had burned the bridge of Burghausen, and all the army was stopped until the river was passed. On arriving at this place, Beyle's companion had to go back with the answer relative to official matters to Alt Oeting, so Beyle remained in a convent of nuns, where he had a fowl, soup, and two slices of bread for breakfast. Here he passed the day, alternately looking at a poor copy of a Madonna of Guido and observing the operation of constructing the bridge, the planks of which seemed to rebel against their destination, and constantly swam down the stream of the rapid Salza.

The bridge was at length completed, and the rest of the day was employed in writing off *currente calamo* the journal of these two days for the amusement of the family circle in Dauphiné, and which we have just condensed for our readers.

The defeat of the Austrians at Landshut had seriously compromised any chance of success in this campaign, and despite all obstacles the French army forced its way through Upper Austria, meeting, however, most determined resistance at various points. "I was inclined to vomit passing the Ebersberg, on seeing the wheels of my carriage squeeze the guts out of the bodies of poor little riflemen, who had been half burned. I began a conversation to abstract me from this horrible spectacle. The consequence was, that my companions thought me to be a man with a heart of iron. I am esteemed, but not liked. This comes from the circumstance, that babbling puerilities twelve hours a day fatigue me, and so I keep silence." Beyle certainly had not the national foible of expressing with amiability and self-esteem all the superfluous observations and commonplace thoughts that pass through one's brain. In this respect, the dry Englishman, the taciturn Dutchman, and the studiously uncommunicative but polite Russian, form striking contrasts to the good-natured garrulity in Beyle's ambulating commissariat office. He had already remarked that the talkers and busybodies with their flood of commonplaces held sway. Following out this train of reflection, he remarks that ambition is like love; it must be sustained by constant intercourse and conversation ("Si l'amour vit d'espoir il s'éteint avec lui").



## CHAPTER IX.

Beyle's Residence in Vienna after the Battle of Wagram—Death of Haydn—Beyle is present at his Requiem—Beyle's Impressions of Vienna in 1809—A Trip to Hungary—The Emperor Francis—Another Marriage projected by Beyle's Friends.

AFTER the roughing of the campaign which ended with Wagram, Beyle enjoyed the residence at Vienna. After his arrival he wrote, "I am perhaps a Viennese for a year or two;" and he presumed that there might be further campaigns in Hungary and Turkey, finishing off with France having what he calls "The kingdom of the Bosphorus!" Nor can we bear hard on Beyle's powers of judgment while indulging in such surmises. He had seen so many wonderful things during the previous dozen years, that the hero he served was in the eyes of the nation not a whit inferior to the Alexanders and Cæsars of antiquity.

In the meantime, there was Vienna, with its solid comforts, its excellent fare, its renowned opera at the Kärnthner Thor theatre, with a ballet of Italian grotesques. He also remarks the amount of female beauty in the heterogeneous and mingled races which compose the population of Vienna. One drawback from his enjoyment of the capital was that he occasionally suffered from fever, and also from a tendency of blood to the head, in consequence of much rapid locomotion in the sun, so that on the first day or two of his arrival he had hot feverish and oppressive sensations, which were got over by hot baths and tranquillity.

Old Joseph Haydn, of whom Beyle became subsequently the biographer, died during his residence in Vienna, and he attended the funeral service in the Scotch church of the Austrian metropolis, close to the so-called "Schotten Thor." Beyle donned his full uniform for the occasion. I have read in one of Beyle's biographies that his companion on the occasion was Denon, that

baronised diplomatist and artist, whose gaiety and vivacity made him as popular before as after the Revolution.

Beyle was on the second bench, the first bench being occupied by the family of Hadyn, whom Beyle styles, "Three or four poor-looking women in black, with ordinary countenances." Beyle also adds, apropos of this solemnity, "This son of a simple peasant raised himself to the production of the immortal 'Creation' by a soul full of sensibility, and studies that enabled him to convey to others those sensations which he himself felt." Mozart's "Requiem," executed by all the leading musicians of the town, was the music of the occasion. Beyle, accustomed to Cimarosa and Paisiello, did not appreciate this sublime production at a first hearing, but he went *ventre à terre* to the representations of "Don Juan," then given at the Wieden Theatre, followed by the ballet of "Paul and Virginia."

His residence at Vienna was varied by a commissariat mission to Hungary, in connection with the provisioning of the French army from that land of cattle and pastures. His first move was to Laxenburg and its park, with the imperial country-house. Beyle remarked the fine views of the Schneeberg on the route thither; and having examined all the environs of Laxenburg, with its trim gardens and endless landscape devices, he then lounged about the Neusiedler See, and proceeded to Eisenstadt, noting the resemblance of the costume of the Pandours to that of French hussars, who wore mustaches and little boots garnished with a rim of silver. Beyle does not seem to know that the hussar of Western Europe is a literal copy of Hungarian cavalry.

The cool air of September appears to have braced up his system, and we hear no more of the fever. He was again in admiration of a lady in Vienna, but whom we cannot guess. He mentions not only the delight he had in conducting his fair one to the Rasumoffsky Gardens, and examining the Belvedere on the Danube, with its successive floors, then all battered and unroofed during the operations of Aspern; but he also notes the pleasure he had in going there alone two days later, and reading in the glades and under those Prater trees where he had walked with

"L'objet qui seul fait mon destin."

Later in the autumn his headquarters were at St Pölten, a considerable town near the issue of the first wide valley west of



Vienna. He received four days' leave, and profited by it to make an escapade back to the capital with a comrade, but without order or passport, and trusting solely to the livery of his coachman. Passing the French outposts, they answered only in German, and had to bear sundry oaths for not being able to speak French, which appears to have amused Beyle. Passing the Austrian posts outside Vienna, they could only speak French, and thus succeeded in entering Vienna without obstacle. They meant to have got out of the carriage and entered as foot-passengers, but they fell asleep, and were waked up just as the carriage was entering Vienna. They named some French officers then resident in Vienna, and were allowed to pass through.

The Emperor Francis had just arrived in his capital a couple of days before. On his way to the Burg, in a travelling carriage with six white horses, he was recognised by the Viennese, whose joy to see their sovereign again was boundless: they wished to take the horses out of his carriage, but he contented himself with saying, "I thank you, my children." When Beyle went to see his friends, there was a consultation about his being present at the *Te Deum*, and it was decided that none should be present in French uniform, as on the entry of the Emperor Francis several French officers had been maltreated by the mob during the enthusiasm. Beyle had a difficulty in getting a cylinder-hat to fit him, as his head was very capacious; so he contented himself with that now obsolete article, a *claque de bal*, or cocked-hat, which, being flattened, can be carried under the arm-pit; for in those days a *gibus* did not exist.

Thus accoutred, their carriage proceeded, in pelting snow, to see the procession of Kaiser Franz going from his palace to St Stephen's to hear a *Te Deum* on the occasion of his safe return. There was no end of lace-bedizened personages and of *vivats* for the Emperor, who acknowledged them by bowing his head forward, like a person who says Yes. When they arrived at St Stephen's, Beyle remarked that it was not spoiled by being done up too fresh, like the Cathedral of Rheims, but left in its venerable greyish black, like the Cathedral of Strasburg. But Beyle and his companions were recognised by the people outside. "Das ist auch ein Franzose" was heard on all sides. These remarks were usually made from curiosity, but sometimes with an expression of hatred. When they entered the church there were more remarks of the same sort. But Beyle found an occasion to be gallant, although the locality was not particularly

suited for it. He recognised Madame S——, who was considered the most beautiful woman in Vienna, with the face of a Raphael Madonna, and about thirty years of age, to whom he said, "It is a fortunate circumstance that, on the last day of my residence in Vienna, I see the most beautiful woman and the most interesting event."

Kaiser Franz arrived, surrounded by his great officers of state, all wet. The Emperor looked fatigued and done up, which was no wonder after such fearful reverses of fortune. But Beyle was so cold and wet that he did not hold out the *Te Deum*, and so went home to warm and dry himself, and write up his journal, while the discharges of musketry shook his windows.

All Beyle's speculations as to further campaigns and advances towards Hungary and Turkey were cut short by the negotiations of Schönbrunn, which had succeeded to the armistice of Znayn. In Germany the success of Napoleon had been complete and overwhelming. Brunswick, Schill, and all the Tugendbündler, had no alternative but death or exile; and the divorce of the Empress Josephine was followed by the marriage with the Archduchess Maria-Louisa, so as to effect a complete change, for a time at least, in the relations between France and Austria.

While Beyle had been philandering in Vienna, the most constant and the most valuable of all his friends, Martial Daru, had been attempting to negotiate for him in France a marriage with a young and good-looking widow, who had two children by her first husband. This lady, a Madame Palfrenier, had a fortune of from six to seven hundred thousand francs, and was moreover of an amiable character. She was not very clever or intelligent, but probably Beyle was too exacting on this score; and when a subsequently proposed marriage also broke down, there are indications that Beyle regretted not having taken advantage of this opportunity of obtaining a fixed position, free from pecuniary cares, which turned out to be the gnawing cancer of his later existence.

## CHAPTER X.

Paris in 1810—Gaiety and Brilliancy of the Society—Marriage of Napoleon with Maria-Louisa—Description of Beyle's Mode of Existence—Paris Amateur Theatricals—Ballroom Fire, and Death of Princess Schwartz-zenberg.

BEYLE, on his return to Paris, took up his quarters, in January 1810, at 28 Rue Colombier, in the Faubourg St Germain, and appears to have enjoyed the high tide of the imperial period. At no epoch since the Revolution was Paris so gay or so prosperous. Always a solar city, it had now become a sort of capital of the continent of Europe. The art treasures of the South and of the North, of Italy, of Spain, of Germany, and of the Netherlands, adorned and even crowded with a multiplicity of objects the public museums. Kings, princes, artists, and men of letters in incessant succession poured into the capital of the new Charlemagne. All the real friends of imperial France declared the edifice complete, and that the period of repose and enjoyment had arrived. But this was not to be: the true gambler's motto, "Double or quits," ruled the destinies of Empire and Emperor.

But Beyle was not among the sober-thinking of the period. The mere spectacle of the fêtes of the marriage, which took place in April 1810, does not make him enthusiastic. He presses his sister to visit Paris, "because twenty years afterwards it will be a thing to remember;" and he adds, "The life of the great man who reigns over us is a guarantee that he will never be long in Paris when there is something great to do elsewhere. The kingdom of the Bosphorus, of Egypt, or of India await us, but what we want at present is a prince-royal for France."

Beyle being launched into the luxurious and expensive society of the period, and associating with many of the higher officers of the army, had a great difficulty in making ends meet. The father, at Claix, thought that the son could now swim without assistance, and this was the year in which Beyle at length suc-

ceeded in securing a fixed income, and in being attached both to the Council of State and to the imperial court, in subordinate but not unlucrative positions with reference to the expense of living at that period. The first post he sought and ultimately obtained was that of one of the auditors of the Council of State.

Writing on the 6th of April to his sister, he admits that he was never so gay in his life. His occupations were a tender admiration of a beauty (of whom more anon), the pursuit of his social-philosophic speculations, literary sketches *à la* Bruyère, and the convivial enjoyments of this most convivial year. In his own language, "I give audience successively to the pleasures of the intellect, of the heart, and even of gastronomy."

In the following letter he writes, "This science of happiness has for me the charm of novelty, consequently I may be mistaken on many points. If I relate my affairs in detail to you, it is for the purpose of painting for your edification the emotions of a heart that belongs to *you*, rather than to trace out a course of conduct which I ought to follow. I have moments of flame, when all my resolutions are sacrificed. On the other hand, after a few days' happiness there is a reaction, and I have an attack of spleen, which does not go off except by corporeal fatigue or persistent and forced study.

"The following is the canvas of my life:—

"I read in the morning some book in which sensibility figures largely. At three o'clock I pay a few necessary visits. I dine joyously in the open air. I spend my evening with amiable and beloved women, and shun like grim death the conversation of vain and disagreeable men, and all the dark side of life. This canvas is deranged three or four times a week by necessary visits. If I have not a good opera buffa (*pour me rinser la bouche*), the contempt for the people whom I am obliged to visit officially turns to bitterness, and I begin to brood over the nature of man. When I write, my mind, occupied with the exact rendering of my thoughts, has no time to be disagreeably affected by the baseness of the model."

Here we are in the full current of the ideas of a Swift and a Rousseau. This is baring the breast to the most intimate of correspondents. What a magazine of savage pride lurked in the breast of this Democritus, who laughed so pleasantly in public at all the vanities of men in general, and of the Frenchman in particular!

"I always congratulate myself on my love of reading. It is a store of happiness always accessible, which mankind cannot deprive one of. People imagine that they have done all the evil in their power to a man when he has been driven from office and reduced to six thousand francs a year. If this man loves books and has a good digestion, he may be more happy than in driving round Paris in full dress, paying tiresome visits to indifferent people.

"I have just passed two agreeable hours with the 'Memoirs of M. de Levis,' and an hour and a half of tender happiness with Tasso. (M. de Levis' ancestors were called Levi, and were relations of the Virgin, so that when they went to church they used to say, 'I am going to pray to my cousin.') The present Duke de Levis was a nobleman with eight hundred thousand livres a year before the Revolution, and still has a quarter of this revenue. He writes much that is unfavourable in relation to the fair sex.

"Maxim 6.—Diminish your relations with men, augment them with things. This is true wisdom. Study and country life are the means to attain such an end."

Beyle's commentary on this is the following:—"No doubt the most truly happy man is he who is born with a taste for botany or astronomy; but when one has only a taste for the knowledge of the machine called man, one must get used to the processes of the anatomist who examines bodies. The anatomist is not shocked by disagreeable odours; he does not say, 'I will be myself stretched out some Sunday;' but he goes on observing muscles and nerves. Therefore let us make the dissection of passions, tastes, and characters, without being shocked by associating with a calumniator or an envious man, or by thinking that this man would calumniate me or disturb my happiness by envy. In this way we may avoid the risk of realising the profound truth of the observation of Fontenelle, that those learned in natural sciences arrive at a great age, being gentle, gay, and somewhat simpletons; on the other hand, those who are profound in a knowledge of mankind are morose, and die of chagrin."

Beyle marks the following observation with the English words, "Very true:—" "The forms of society are like habiliments; they serve to cover defects and secret sores until intimacy discovers them; therefore the wise man does not thoughtlessly provoke close intimacy."

Beyle's observation on this is, that he had had much annoyance

in consequence of not having practised this maxim, but he meant in future to act up to it. He asks from his sister a list of the books she has read the last two years; and on the subject of connected reading he adds, "People vaunt constancy in love, which is impossible; constancy in objects of study is one of the secrets of happiness." Beyle recommends a long list of books, in which I find the dramas of Joanna Baillie, "Tom Jones," Champfort's Works, Letters of Mdlle. Espinasse, &c., &c. He ends, "Always read Shakespeare, for whom my admiration does not increase, because it cannot increase."

At this period (spring of 1810) Beyle sketched out a little essay on the manners of a *chatterbox*, and of the fault of chattering, which he calls "*Tatillonnage*."

"The weather was cold and wet, and I was returning from a visit which I had paid a few leagues from Paris, and meeting one of my friends, who is not a good rider, he handed his horse to his servant, and coming into my carriage, we began to talk of '*tatillonnage*.' This is a defect peculiar to the French nation—an extreme importance which vain people attach to small details. It fills up conversation in the provinces, and drives away all naturalness. The Frenchman who speaks is always intent on his own importance, hunting after epigrams which may show off his wit, and not thinking of the proper object of conversation. My friend gave me an anecdote of A. and R., the former of whom had fallen into a ditch in taking a leap, so that his breeches were spotted. The following was the colloquy between A. and R.:—

"A. 'I should like to have some idea of the good society in Madrid with which you have been well acquainted.'

"R. 'With pleasure. Like all the people of the South, they gesticulate a great deal.' (A. who, in order to appear lively, gesticulates a great deal, becomes serious.)

"A. 'A la bonne heure! but is gesticulation a defect? What is the usual subject of conversation of those amiable Castilians?'

"R. 'Toilette—the form of a pair of breeches, for instance.'

"A. (Piqued.) 'But in general conversation people cannot go into the sublimities of science. Everybody cannot'——(interruption from want of ideas).

"R. 'What is worse is, that those people who talk of toilette have sometimes dirty breeches.'

"A. becomes abstracted, and reflects that his breeches have an

ugly little spot upon them, and says to himself, ‘This cold and mocking man does not suit me.’”

Beyle, reverting to the argument, adds, “The Germans seem to me to be entirely free from *tatillonage*. The Italian, who enjoys the pleasures of taste for the fine arts, and is also fond of every sensual pleasure, from love of the fair sex to well-confectioned ices, is free from this defect. *Tatillonage* is the great enemy of true pleasantry.”

It was in such little sketches as these, on which we will waste no time in criticising their crudities, that Beyle prepared himself for the splendid series of works, so full of wit, wisdom, and knowledge of the science of society, which saw the light after the close of his official career during the Empire.

In the month of May, Beyle was assured that his name was seen in the list of auditors initiated by the Emperor himself. He writes on the 23d of this month, “In the morning, when I have been alone, and my day not yet spoiled by the contact of any man, my soul turns to sensibility; but when one sees that *canaille*, with their ambition, their vanity, and their hunt after money and success——.” Beyle does not finish the sentence, and compels us to remember that, although he himself was rather proud than ambitious and vain, yet he never did arrive at philosophic indifference, and that want of money, and of success in procuring it, was the cancer of his existence.

Beyle paints one of the families where he passed many evenings at this period (1810)—Madame S——, full of goodness, and fifty years of age; the daughters pretty and intelligent; some rich, gay, and good-natured young men also in the circle; but the young ladies attempted what was impossible—*i.e.*, to have the sentiments of a passionate soul without going beyond the reserve and coldness of *bon ton*. These young ladies could say only things that were quite commonplace. “Unfortunately nothing is interesting but what is a little extraordinary,” is the reflection which Beyle makes. But he found this ennui of happiness (*ennui du bonheur*) in most of the societies which he frequented. Beyle, in all the gaiety of youthful spirits and promising prospects, had not yet tasted that other and worst ennui of unhappiness, which subsequently poisoned years of existence, and brought him to the verge of suicide. The following is interesting, but is a curious outburst of the pride of an intellectual aristocrat:—

“Picard has painted the manners of the little towns. Molière

could avenge his provincial characters in showing them the dupery and ennui of that *beau-monde* of the capital whom they usually envy. On arriving in Paris, provincials are dazzled and pleased with everything. They return home regretting that society in which everything has pleased them, not excepting that monster with the terrible claws—the fear of ridicule. I see young people, worthy of enjoying happiness and of communicating it to others, go near this society, and fly it as if they had made a wager to do so. I have seen foxes with their tails cut off advise people with their tails on. All this proves to me that when a cod will live in the waters of the Seine, a man with the sensibility of an artist can live in the *beau-monde* of Paris. There is one reasonable course to take—to live for love without being a St Preux ; to yield to those tender inclinations that visit a soul of sensibility, and admire the masterpieces of art, from the divine St Cecilia of Raphael to the Nicomede of Talma ; but to regard all that mere society says as so much senseless noise when they begin to dogmatise on things invisible to them, but to be all attention when they sup together, for then general society is charming.”

Beyle was at this time out of humour, for this very month of May had brought with it an incident not flattering to his acute sensibility. His sister and his brother-in-law, M. Perier, had tried to arrange another marriage for him. It appears that Beyle and the young lady were pleased with each other, but that certain near relatives of the lady were not disposed to receive Beyle on a footing of social equality. This gave Beyle such violent chagrin that he said he had to work off his bile with a journey of a hundred leagues. He writes to Perier on the 24th of May—

“I passed, on the public square of Orleans, a night from one o'clock to four in the morning, which I will long remember. The result of my musings is, that a man should never enter into a family in which he is not adopted with pleasure. Pride has so got the upper hand with me, that I could not avoid sending to the devil the most powerful relations if they pretend to go out of the sphere of perfect equality. The amiable young lady will thus be placed in a very embarrassing situation. Besides, I have not a sous, and there is a great difference between being the wife of a receiver-general and a poor devil of an auditor. Two years ago I declined a considerable fortune, and a lady so amiable that I have since paid court to her.



"You are right to complain of my unsettled life, and yet there are scarcely two or three hearts that love me a little. I am neither ripe enough nor rich enough for marriage; therefore get children whom I may love as I love you."

In June he is anxious about the auditorship. He considered it probable, but not certain. He was destined to occupy a commissariat post at Lyons, but he managed to stave off going thither. He writes to Pauline—

"If his majesty goes to Italy, do not fail to see the great man at Lyons or Chambéry. I went yesterday to the top of the column of the Place Vendôme. It is the only perfectly beautiful thing that I have seen completed here. I contemplated the statue sitting on one of its thighs. The view is superb.

"Have you read 'Corinne?' It is excellent, when it is not detestable. There are great truths in it. Madame de Staël is marked out to write a work on the spirit of the drawing-room society of the eighteenth century. When she sticks to this subject she is excellent, but when she quits it she is mediocre. All that she says of the total want of vanity of the Italians is most true."

Beyle had no taste for the ordinary amusements of social intercourse; his eyes were always fixed on the sunny heights of art and literature. He writes, "I live in intimacy with people born to several hundred thousand francs a year, plebeians who have noble titles, decorations, and, withal, herculean health; but they are unhappy because they have souls without sensibility or the love of letters. Their evenings are frightful from ennui, and at five-and-thirty a rubber of whist is to them a means of happiness."

Beyle shows from time to time traces of hoping to become a man of mark. In the end of June we find him in festivities and amateur theatricals in a country-house in the environs of Paris, which I presume to have been that of M. Martial Daru. He writes to his sister, and thinks the title of his letters to her may be called "Melancholy reveries, which are perhaps the road to happiness, and except in the matter of pride (which is to be reprehended), that a young man of melancholy mood may be

'Verme già, ma destinato a diventâr Angelica Farfalla.'

After this curt but beautiful quotation, impersonating the ambition that soars on splendid wings, Beyle quickly bids adieu to melancholy reverie, and then out comes the irrepressible gaiety of

the Gaul. "Adieu! I am about to disguise myself as a Westphalian, in order to sing couplets with the best of Pierrots."

On the 2d July he writes, "Our little family fête was delightful. The couplets composed by Picard, who, with a livery on his back, played with us, were charming. There was a little tenderness of feeling, but much laughter afterwards. Two hundred persons came. Fitz-James kept us laughing, after which we danced. I went away at daybreak, the last of the company.

"Yesterday being St Martial's Day, we had quite a family dinner with Martial Daru, and at half-past eight, Madame Zenaïde embarked for the fête given by Prince Schwartzberg, the Austrian ambassador. As the hotel would have been much too small to hold the thousand guests that were invited, a great pavilion of pine-wood had been erected, the floor of which was three feet above the ground. In order to take away the odour of the pine-wood, the interior had been painted, and some turpentine had entered into the composition. When they were at the height of the festivity, and while his majesty was promenading round the room, a waxlight fell and set fire to a curtain of baize, which spreading, set fire in a few moments to both walls and roof. The supports of the lustres being burnt, the latter fell and broke the floors in several places. Imagine the cries, the tumult of those who, escaping from the fire, could not find wives, husbands, or children. The unfortunate Princess Schwartzberg was the victim of her maternal love in returning to the pavilion to save her child. What rendered this accident unique was the terrible contrast of the gay and the horrible, for a tempest of thunder and lightning raged outside at the same time. Happily our excellent relations have met with no disaster."

## CHAPTER XI.

1810 continued—Beyle made Auditor of Council of State—Is Attached to the Household of Napoleon I. as Inspector of the Buildings and Furniture of the Crown—Plan of Prizes for Philosophical Essays—Official Inspection of Sèvres—Impressions of Isabey the Painter—Inspection of Versailles and Trianon—Presentation to Maria-Louisa.

THE month of July was an anxious one for Beyle, because in the beginning of August the three hundred auditors of the Council of State were to be chosen out of no less than six thousand candidates that were now moving heaven and earth for these posts. At length, when Beyle had an audience of "an unapproachable man" (*un homme inabordable*), who probably was either the Arch-Chancellor, Cambacères, or the Minister of War, he considered his nomination secure.

In a letter to his sister, which he instructed her to burn, but which, being preserved, was sixty years afterwards carefully perused by his British biographer, he gaily describes in detail the prudential devices to which he resorted in order to double this bluff headland in his official career. When a man publishes a book, he lays himself open to criticism; but when a man writes to his most intimate correspondent, with express instructions to burn the letter, the biographer is bound to look on it as a privileged communication, and to make no more use of it than as a collateral aid to general conclusions in conscientious elucidation of the character of the subject of his work, without reproduction or even extract. I will therefore say, that Beyle did no more than what thousands of candidates for office, considering themselves the most honest men on the face of the earth, have done to secure their point. Stoic philosophy, like love and friendship, are subjected to too severe a test when pitted against daily bread. Only one remark may be permitted: when a man does go through the ordeal of antechambers and assiduous court-paying, it is as well not to launch forth on other occasions such expressions of contempt upon the bespattered candidates for office (*solliciteurs crottés*), "the ambitious" and

"the worldly." Beyle was a proud man, and certainly a man of perfect probity in pecuniary affairs ; but when such a point as this was to be gained, the pride was carefully thrust into a corner, with a view to the main chance.

The Darus did not succeed in persuading him to an advantageous marriage, but they did all in their power to aid him on this occasion. On the 3d of August he was named auditor, and having been already assistant-commissary, he was attached to the section of the Ministry of War. Nor did his favours stop here. On the 22d August of the same month, Count Pierre Daru, steward of the imperial household, procured him the agreeable post of one of the two "Inspectors of the Accounts of the Furniture and Edifices of the Crown," and from that day, the Tuileries, St Cloud, Versailles, Fontainebleau, Compiègne, and Rambouillet were the sphere of his duties. These duties enabled him to make pleasant official trips to the environs of Paris, where his artistic inclinations and his turn for architecture and internal decoration were in full play. His office was the most pleasantly situated of any in all Paris, overlooking the Invalides, the wooded heights of Meudon being visible on the southern horizon. The emoluments of the two posts (including some duties in connection with the Civil List of Holland) were twelve thousand francs a year. Beyle's debts at this period were about seven thousand francs, or under £300 sterling ; therefore, with only a little perseverance and economy, he was now in a position to get out of all his difficulties.

He was soon sensible of the firm footing he had on the ladder of official promotion, and he remarks how winning smiles decorated the countenances of numerous new friends, who previously never occupied themselves with him.

*"Donec eris felix multas numerabis amicos."*

But the financial question troubled him, and he employed his cousin, Faure, then going to Grenoble, to raise a loan of from six to eight thousand francs for him. We must therefore regard as a mere intellectual squib a document which he drew up at this time, disposing of certain sums of money in prizes for the best essays on those passions of man with which he so constantly occupied himself.

This strange disposition was, that his pecuniary means should be employed after his death in a sort of rotatory international literary prize ; and, strange to say, although 1810 was a period of

acute war between France and England, Beyle's wish was that the funds should be invested in land in the neighbourhood of Philadelphia and Edinburgh, and the prizes distributed by turns from London, Paris Gottingen, Berlin, Naples, or Philadelphia. It cannot be considered otherwise than flattering to the independence and probity of the British character, that he desired that, if this were not practicable on the Continent, the prize should be conferred by a society composed of Englishmen; and he adds, "I am sure that this nation will always furnish more than twenty enlightened and courageous men, who will not disdain to be useful to mankind in seconding my views." The style of the work gaining the prize was to be simple, like an anatomical description, and not oratorical; the thoughts, and not the style, to prevail with the judges; the object being to analyse ambition, love, vengeance, hatred, laughter, tears, smiles, friendship, terror, &c., &c. The prize was to consist, first, of a gold medal, with the inscriptions—"Nosce te ipsum," and "Happiness is in limited monarchy;" secondly, of an English edition of Shakespeare of the value of ten napoleons.

There is no allusion to this scheme in any of Beyle's wills, copies of which are in my possession; but Beyle himself in his own works makes large contributions to literature in the very fields above indicated; his most profound and original work, "*De l'Amour*," comprising a large amount of matter illustrative not only of love, but of friendship, jealousy, hatred, and vengeance; and, in fact, all his works are pervaded with the subject of his favourite study—the foibles of human nature. And he usually realises his own programme of making these lucubrations more remarkable for thought than for the rhetorical and declamatory style of the Chateaubriands, the Fontanes, and the Salvandys, for which he had so little relish. But, avoiding the pomp and inflation of these men, Beyle would have done well to have attended more to accuracy of style, as well as perspicuity, on which latter point he is not always satisfactory. In the race for originality, he is sometimes obscure.

Towards the end of September he received orders to inspect Versailles, and went, in company of persons of importance (*des hommes puissants*), probably Duroc Duke de Frioul, or some leading personages of the household, first, to Sèvres, where he was received by the son of the administrator of the manufacture, M. Brogniart, jun., of that family which is identified so closely with the great improvements in the manufacture of this porcelain,

which has attained so high a European reputation. The most beautiful object was the round table containing the portraits of the principal marshals, with that of the Emperor in the middle. These were painted by Isabey, the celebrated miniature painter of the Empire. He was a man of great talent, but had not, as an individual, the noble simplicity of David or the retiring modesty of Proudhon. He was a courtier, and Beyle writes in his journal of this trip—

“Isabey, with a histrionic face and a forced politeness, did the honours of his table to the influential individuals whom I accompanied. The table truly gives the idea of perfection, above all, in the portraits of Marshals Soult and Bernadotte; Davoust and Berthier appear to me to be less successful. This charming work must one of these days go through the fire, which may break it.”

Beyle found the imitation of sculpture to be unsuccessful, and thought that models should have been requested from Canova and Thorvaldsen. The figure of the Emperor on horseback was found by Beyle to be a specimen of pretty insignificance (*mesquine et jolie*).

Beyle found Versailles to have the streets of a capital, and the shops of a provincial town. They descended at the house of a M. Claidot, who, although a little too much Versailleomane, was not without intelligence; the proof of which adduced by Beyle was, the excellence of his wines, with the drawback that they were without ice. Beyle found the Trianons pretty, neither dull nor majestic; the furniture not sufficiently fine for a sovereign who had great representation to support; and, moreover, a want of comfort and conveniences in the bedrooms. He remarked a pretty picture of the affair of Arcola. The busts of the imperial family were bad, but the inscriptions in good taste, simply “Louis,” “Joseph,” “Elise,” and “Pauline.” The room of the Emperor was little and inconvenient, but with fine engravings, such as the “Giardiniera Virgin,” after Raphael, the “Bélisaire” of Gérard, &c., &c. Beyle noticed the well-grown trees in the gardens. “It was, moreover, a king’s pleasaunce, a merit much appreciated by those whose souls are below the appreciation of the beautiful.”

The actual work of Beyle’s places was quite nominal, but Martial Daru gave him much additional work in other departments. The plan of Beyle was, if possible, to make his official employments as court placeman the “embroidery of his exis-

tence." The ground was to be his studies of the human passions ; but he found that he could not get what is essential to such studies, viz., the solitude and abstraction of mind without which there could be no progress. "The work of reflection cannot be put on and off like a coat ; I require an hour or two of preparation, and I have only moments."

He usually dined in company with his friend Bonval, a man of amiable character, and then went to the Italian Opera Buffa, where "*Le Nozze di Figaro*" was this autumn the magnet of attraction. After he got news that his efforts to raise a loan were to be crowned with success, he writes to Grenoble on the 8th of October for some bed and table linen, as he was about to quit his lodgings, and keep house with one of the most intimate of his friends, M. Louis de Bellile, at Rue Neuve du Luxembourg, at the corner of the Rue Mont Thabor. "Nothing that can contribute to my happiness is awaiting to me. My position is very agreeable ; people that I scarcely know pay me visits. I receive every evening at least sixty smiles more than three months ago. I can, moreover, say that this is my own work. Nevertheless, the images of solid happiness which I thought to find with Mdlle. V—— trouble me a little. I need to love and be loved. I do what I can to love P——, but she has not the feeling soul. She does not understand that delicacy which makes the happiness of those for whom it is visible. She puts an overgreat value on those follies of ambition which, after attainment, produce no enjoyment. Do not mock me for those foibles of my heart ; not a soul in the world beside yourself is aware of them."

With regard to the other lady who had been proposed to him by his brother-in-law, M. Perier, he writes on the 22d October in a curious Anglo-French jargon, which was, no doubt, intended to be incomprehensible to curious servants or others, and which we reproduce literally, it being a confirmation of his resolution not to proceed further in the project of marriage—

"Si un hazard extremement peu probable faisait que la personne upon whom thy husband has written to me for a bride, te parlait of me, remember thyself that my admiration is hers for ever, but not my bond."

In consequence of his place at court, Beyle was in close relations with Duroc Duke de Frioul, the grand-marshal of the palace, and the most intimate of all the personal friends of the Emperor. Later, and elsewhere, I will mention the occasions on which Beyle conversed with Napoleon I. in person, But I

find no trace of his having had any personal relations with Napoleon during this first employment at court. The Emperor no doubt expressed his will as to his residences and their furniture to Duroc. But in this year, 1810, Beyle was presented to the Empress Maria-Louisa at the Tuileries, on Sunday, the 16th December, after mass, in presence of the Duchess of Montebello, lady of honour of the Empress.

This presentation grew naturally out of Beyle's court employment. The philosopher and man of the world is not dazzled by the adventitious or blind to the intrinsic. But the student of human nature derives positive advantage from seeing something of such scenes and such personages. A mere bookworm must always be an imperfect man of letters, if the social history and physiology of man be the subject of his studies. The mental habits of those who possess power, who dispense favour, who maintain popularity by graciousness, who sometimes ask services by remote hints, who have no thought for daily bread, but to whom the constantly being sought after is a primary necessity of existence, and who yet complain if worried or hunted, are essentially different from those of the ordinary jostling and elbowing crowd of humanity rushing to fortune through its hundred gates and passages, from high law and high finance to humble handicraft and hard-fisted rural economy.

On Christmas Day Beyle's thoughts are with his family, particularly his most beloved sister, Pauline. The following is a delightful and most curious map of the meanderings of the mind of a man of intellectual tastes on his holiday. If he could, like Don Magnifico, make a catalogue of his newly-acquired adventitious superiorities since he became a court placeman, yet the heart of the man and the brother retained all its exquisite inherent sensibility.

*" 25th December 1810.*

" Christmas has left me a little tranquillity, my dear Pauline, and the old bent of my mind has made me take up a book that reminds me of the studies which inflamed me during the years of poverty which I passed in Paris. I have read the first eighty pages of Burke 'On the Sublime,' twenty times laying down the book irresolute between my present ideas of ambition and regret at living no longer in the midst of those vigorous, noble, and tender ideas which occupied my mind when I lived in the Rue D'Angevilliers, opposite the beautiful colonnade of the Louvre, and with not six francs in my pocket, passing whole evenings in



seeing the stars set behind this edifice. But for six months I have had no time for reflection on these old studies. My reading has been the novels of Lafontaine, which one can take up or lay down at any moment.

"Reading Burke, my current of ideas was always interrupted by reproaching myself for this or that neglected visit. Powerful friends have lent me money. I have hired some apartments, noble, simple, and freshly done up, and hung with charming engravings. I sought to enjoy them with my soul of 1804, but found it impossible. I have a fine view from the window of my little cabinet, and I contemplated a sunset athwart rain and heavy clouds riven by a tempestuous wind. I opened mechanically the drawer of my bureau, in which I put interesting papers. I opened a little letter, and it was from you. I never felt with more delight the pleasure of loving you. This charming letter is of the 15th March; but I do not know what year. All that you say in this letter is in perfect harmony with what I feel; it is another myself whose letter I was reading. The resemblance of our handwriting increased this charming illusion. I feel acutely the chagrin of being deprived of your letters. I send you the letter of March; read it, and send it back. If you read it, you will be unable to resist the desire of writing me. I myself shed hot tears while writing you, so let us talk of something else.

"I have before me a charming engraving of Porporati, entitled the 'Bath of Leda.' It is a third of the divine triptical picture of Correggio which is in the Museum [of the Louvre]. In the engraving are three women, two swans, and an eagle. Hanging beside this engraving is the portrait of the inspired Mozart, which I bought in Vienna from Artaria, who was personally acquainted with the master, and assured me that it was a good resemblance. To-morrow the 'Nozze di Figaro' will be given; but I will be obliged to miss the first half of it in order to go to a house where I was presented last Wednesday. I remained a quarter of an hour, and saw Madame Récamier, who was charming, and Madame Tallien, very non-charming, but remarkable.

"Why did you not come to Paris? I will certainly go and embrace you, even if I were to desert my service. Adieu! thou whom I love best in this world; my tears overpower me. Burn this letter."

## CHAPTER XII.

1811—Beyle Pursues his Studies of French Society—Obtains Leave of Absence from the Duke of Cadore—Revisits Italy—Interview with a Milanese Lady—Revives his Impressions of Italian Art—His Longing to be Established in Italy.

IN the beginning of 1811, we find Beyle to be pursuing his studies on points akin to what were to be the subjects of the prizes mentioned in that testamentary sketch which might have become a valid document had fortune favoured him with sufficient funds to carry out the literary and philanthropic project. "Can comedy be useful?" is a question which he asked of his friend and schoolfellow M. Colomb, the controller of the "Droits Rennis," or, as we should say, of the inland revenue, at Geneva, then capital of a French Department. He considered his friend M. Colomb to be the right man in the right place; for in subsequent works Geneva was considered by Beyle as the city of Reason ("ville essentiellement raisonnable"). M. Colomb was a man of literary tastes, who at a later period brought out an annotated edition of President de Brosses' most curious Letters on Italy, and a man in whose conversation and correspondence Beyle delighted. He was the husband of one of Beyle's cousins; and in mature life, Beyle expressed so much regard for this couple, that he declared himself ready, in the event of Colomb's decease, to marry the widow. Beyle's sister, Pauline, when she became a widow by the death of M. Perier, resided for a considerable time with the Colomb family in their house, Rue Godot de Mauroy. The real services which Colomb has rendered to literature have been, first of all, in exhuming De Brosses' letters; and, secondly, by his short but authentic Memoir of Beyle. De Brosses was a sort of predecessor of Beyle in acute analysis and observation of Italian society, although inferior to the latter in profundity. Colomb's Memoir of Beyle is the most accurate of any in its dates and statements, but far too brief and fugitive; and certainly he has not given us the tenth part of

what it would have interested the public to know had he taken advantage of his opportunities.

Beyle, in a letter to Colomb of 26th January 1811, found that the opinion of society was far too dominant over the French mind. The too great fear of ridicule was, according to Beyle, inconsistent with independence of character, and that one of the objects of the dramatist having a social mission ought to be to make Frenchmen seek more happiness in home affections and in intimate intercourse. Therefore the dramatist might study in all the houses of his acquaintance what things were hurtful to the happiness of the family, and that the true object of the writer of comedy ought to be to show the bad habits that lead to unhappiness under their most ridiculous aspect.

Such is the theory of Beyle. Unfortunately the dramatists that set out a moralising are generally dull and unamusing, and the amusing are not always free from the coarseness that characterises faithful transcripts of human life. Let us therefore prize those Molières and Goldonis who procure such hours of delightful hilarity or pleasantry, and who, notwithstanding some licenses characteristic of their age, have upon the whole done that work which Beyle thought should be done by the dramatist.

In February we find Beyle reviving the studies of his former Paris residence, and again going through the *Logic of Destutt de Tracy*, and sending long extracts to his sister, with his commentaries. We will not trouble the reader with reproductions of the trite processes of the Realist school. These studies rather inflate him, and he alludes proudly to the satisfactory growth of his intellectual powers. He used to consider M. Gros the man most distinguished in Grenoble for wit and wisdom; but perhaps an interview of a couple of hours, after six years' absence from Grenoble, and six years of Beyle's own mental gymnastic, would alter his opinion. He adds—

“Adieu! my dear friend. Avoid contagion by always reasoning closely. If Molière were to tell me that such and such a lady was a coquette, I should ask him to give me the proofs of it. True science in everything, from breeding turkeys to the painting the ‘Atala’ of Girodet, lies in the study of facts and their circumstances.” \*

\* The “Atala” of Girodet was one of the favourite pictures of Beyle, and indeed the most perfect of this unequal master. It had been the most admired work of the Paris Exhibition of 1808, during Beyle's residence in

In March there were busy doings in Beyle's office, and endless gaieties in Parisian society. By the birth of the King of Rome on the 20th of the month, Napoleon had apparently arrived at the summit of his desires. Happy indeed would it have been for him and his had he hung up his conquering sword and reposed on his laurels. The sound advice of Talleyrand at this time was to evacuate Spain, to restore Poland, where Joseph could have found a throne more secure than that of Madrid; to separate Austria from Russia, and firmly solder the Austrian alliance by securing to Napoleon's father-in-law the principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia. But it was not written in the book of fate that the conqueror was to accomplish the work of the consolidator. After 1811 came 1812, and after 1812 came the still more fatal 1813.

Beyle was not among the sober and practical thinkers, even from the French imperialist point of view. He had dreams of the empire of the Bosphorus and of India, of *castles in Spain* and palaces in the East, when not only the Marquis Wellesleys, but Frenchmen of the most diverse opinions on domestic affairs, the Talleyrands as well as the Lanjuinais and the Carnots, felt certain that France would suddenly awake with stupor to the spectacle of a catastrophe that no human genius could avert.

After a short trip to Havre with some friends in the summer of 1811, Beyle, more at ease in his affairs, felt a longing to revisit Italy, and for that purpose received leave of absence from his immediate chief, General de Champagne, who had succeeded Count Daru as steward of the household of the Emperor. He started in August, and we find him on the 10th of September writing to his sister from Milan—

“M. C. [Champagne] has had the goodness to give me a leave of absence, and I have come here to salute my old friends on my way to see Rome and Naples. Milan offers me very tender recollections, for here I passed the dear delightful years of my adolescence. Here I was most in love, and here my character was formed. I feel that I have an Italian heart, assassinations excepted, which, by the by, is a groundless accusation. The enthusiastic relish for gaiety and music, and the art of enjoying life with tranquillity, is quite in the Milanese character.”

Brunswick. Its truly poetical character and its simplicity of composition, with excellent technical handling, contrasted favourably with the “Deluge” of 1806, a work far too spasmodic and pantomimic in treatment for the art of painting.

On the same day that this letter was written, he presented himself to a lady whom I take to be the "Angela" whom he used to admire in the year following the campaign of Marengo, and of which interview there is an account in a short journal of this tour, in which he wrote—"Presented in all humility to M. H. B. aged thirty-eight, who will perhaps be alive in 1821, by his very humble servant more gay than himself." The H. B. of 1811.

"I had seen her for the last time on the 23d of September 1801, when going from Brescia to Savighano, where my regiment was. To-day at one o'clock, 10th September 1811, I presented myself to her. Fortunately I was made to wait a quarter of an hour, which gave me time to collect myself.

"I saw a tall and superb woman. She has always a grandiose expression, from the manner in which her eyes, her brows, and her nose are placed to each other. I found her with more intelligence, more majesty, and less fascinating grace. In 1801 she was majestic by beauty, but now by the expression and development of her features. She did not recognise me; this gave me pleasure. I recovered myself, saying that I was Beyle, the friend of Joinville. 'He is the gentleman whom we used to nickname the *Chinese*,' said she to her father, who happened to be present."

The revival of acquaintance with this lady seems to have heightened Beyle's enjoyment of Italy. During the subsequent expedition to Russia, his thoughts revert more than once to "Angela." He writes on the 20th September 1811, "The seeing things new and beautiful has given me more pleasure than all the enjoyments of vanity which Paris can confer upon me. If I dared, I should quit my appointment, and should dispense with a horse six months in the year, in order to travel every autumn." When his appointment quitted him in 1814, he realised this longing by a seven years' habitual residence in Milan.

His general impressions of Italy in the autumn of 1811 are given in various letters which we condense. He started on the 21st September for Rome; he writes from Rome, on the 2d October, that he has seen the "Loggie" of Raphael, and he thinks "that one should sell one's shirt when one has not seen them, and again do so if one has admired them and longs to see them again."

On the 8th he writes, "There are four things to observe in Italy—1st, The soil and climate; 2d, The character of the inhabitants; 3d, Painting, sculpture and architecture; 4th, Music.

I find the soil well described by Arthur Young. As for the national character, nobody has described it; it must be sought in history. Sismondi, the pupil of an excellent school, although a man without genius, has shown this character in the 'History of the Republics of the Middle Ages.'

"With regard to music, in 1778, when Voltaire and Rousseau died, and when all art in France was in the last stage of decadence, music was at its climax; for Pergolese, Cimarosa, and Jemelli had produced vocal music that had never been equalled except by Mozart, and that in the melancholy vein only.

"In regard to painting, I advise you to borrow Vasari. It is full of gossip [*bavardage*]; nevertheless read the lives and adventures of nine great painters—Michael Angelo, Leonardo da Vinci, Raphael, Correggio, Titian, Annibale Carracci, Guido, Domenichino, and Guercino. The last of the great painters was Raphael Mengs, so the two greatest artists of the eighteenth century, Mozart and Mengs, were Germans."

General Champagny, Duke de Cadore, having prolonged his leave of absence for a month, he returned to Milan in the end of October. He writes on the 29th—

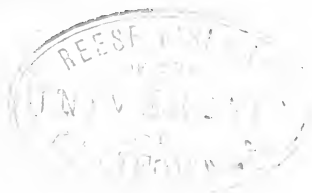
"Ha! my friend, how I regretted you in Italy! If one has a heart and a shirt, one must sell the shirt to see the Lago Maggiore, St Croce at Florence, the Vatican, and Vesuvius. I know sixty books of travels in Italy, and not two of them are passable. At Paris you will find the finest things in the universe,\* but it is a seraglio where every one is a eunuch, even the master. These sublime things are not enjoyed by the inhabitants of Paris, who are occupied with their little vanity, their little evening society, and their first evening of a vaudeville written by one of their friends.

"The Italian populations are, on the contrary, bilious and not at all amiable. The Italian *canaille* is the most annoying in the world, and unfortunately a stranger is in incessant contact with the *canaille*; and except in the large towns, the inns are filthy. But this people is born for the arts, and full of sensibility. An old notary of fifty, more meanly avaricious than M. Girard, the apothecary, will be in ecstasies before a Correggio, will speak of nothing else for twenty-four hours, and will spend ten louis d'ors

\* The Louvre then possessed the greatest masterpieces of Italian art, which were returned to their owners after 1815.

to have a copy of it. In the evening, at the theatre, he will almost burst his lungs with applause of an opera of Simon Mayer, and then he will return to his avarice and his meanness. But there is much less vanity than with us; not the smallest effort to hide what is ridiculous. 'Why should I disturb myself? Why should I give myself the trouble?' is the answer to any question on this score."

On the subject of music, we find that Beyle relished the "Matri-monio Segreto," "which one must know by heart," and the much less known "Trame Deluse" of Cimarosa, and above all, the "Figaro" and "Don Juan" of Mozart. This was the period of the interregnum of Simon Mayer and Ferdinand Paer, between Mozart and Rossini, and just on the eve of the dawn of the latter; for to the roseate twilight of "L'Inganno Felice" in 1812 was about to succeed the radiant splendour of "Tancredi" and "L'Italiana" in 1813.



## CHAPTER XIII.

1812—Beyle joins the Expedition to Russia—Beyle's Impressions of August Wilhelm Schlegel—Passage of the Niemen—Commissariat Difficulties—Burning of Smolensko—Beyle's Disappointments and Hypochondria—Burning of Moscow—Retreat from Moscow.

IN the beginning of the eventful year 1812, there was a question of Beyle's being sent to Amsterdam by M. de Champagny, as he had to do with the Dutch Civil List, but there are no traces of the actual journey. His project at this time was, that his father should if possible receive the title of a baron. Had the Empire lasted, Beyle certainly had those social and official relations which lead to honours in a country where either a large estate or the filling of the highest offices in the gift of the crown is not essential to this rank. But we are now arrived at the beginning of the end of the Napoleonic epopee; near the beginning of the short commons of poor Beyle, and near the beginning of that leisure which led to one of the greatest literary reputations of the nineteenth century. Had the Empire lasted, we should have had the fatted bureaucrat and courtier, the dinner-giving Beyle, the gastronomic patron of arts and letters, perhaps the baron and the senator. Beyle would have escaped many woful pecuniary distresses during the sequel, but it is doubtful if there would have been the production of so many volumes of instruction and entertainment, relished by the most cultivated minds.

“Monsieur le Duc [de Cadore] has not yet fixed the day of my departure for Amsterdam. I think of remaining there a month. I have caught cold, and have no ideas. I write you only that no grass should grow on the road of our friendship, and this at the risk of making you yawn. If you wish to drive away yawning, read the Letters of Madame du Deffand; it is one of the most remarkable works that I have seen published here. She confirms me in my system of not making one's happiness dependent on anybody, and in having an object and serious occupation. In



that case, all sorts of reading become interesting. When we are sure of finding a happy tranquillity in one's study, we have a great power over society, for one can do without it, and mock at the human *canaille*."

Full of the idea of making an interesting and picturesque military promenade to Moscow and its Kremlin, as if it were a trip to Vienna or Berlin, and of being a spectator of and sharer in new triumphs of the Emperor, Beyle thoughtlessly made light of his comfortable post at court, and after overcoming great opposition on the part of M. de Champagny, steward of the imperial household, he got leave to make the Russian campaign of 1812 in the commissariat department.\* But Beyle little foresaw that it would be only by a miracle of good fortune that he would again see France, although half dead with fatigue and suffering and privation, and his outfit reduced to little more than what he wore on his back.

On the 26th of July, Beyle reached Fulda, and on the following day he rested, for the first time since leaving Paris, at a village not far from those fields of Lützen and Jena which have such a historic celebrity. All around were peaceful and subdued populations, that, in the following year, rose so energetically against their foreign masters.

"We feel at Weimar the presence of a prince who is a friend of the arts ; † but I saw with regret that, as at Gotha, nature has done nothing for it ; it is as flat as Paris. The Eisenach part of the road is made beautiful by the forests that skirt it. Passing Weimar, I sought with my eyes the Belvedere, for a reason that you well know." (Then in English)—"Give me some news of Mrs Viet.

"Am I going into Russia for four months or two years ? I don't know. That which I do know is, that my happiness is placed in that beautiful country—

\* There is much to be said in favour of the theory that Beyle's secret motive in going to Russia was to create a claim for promotion, and some employment in the country of Angela ; but it was precisely the commissariat department that was most under the ire of Napoleon during this expedition, with its insurmountable difficulties.

† In a short essay on August Wilhelm Schlegel in subsequent years, Beyle speaks of having met him in Weimar society, and was struck with his handsome countenance, but savage and sombre air. Beyle speaks of him as one of the most vivid and brilliant intelligences that he had met. He noticed his admirable speaking of German, and remarked that he was religious and a stranger to gaiety. "He spoke against gaiety as a blind man speaks against light," was a natural reflection of our lively Gaul.

“ Che il mar circonda  
E che l'Alpe et l'Appenin parte.”

Already he had discovered the great mistake he had made, and all through Poland and Russia this regret and this longing for Italy goes on *crescendo*. One can well imagine that he had no agreeable existence in this trip, so thoughtlessly undertaken, because the commissariat difficulties were infinitely greater than in any former expedition, from the enormous number of men engaged in it, and the great care which the Russian skirmishers had to remove all the cattle and supplies possible from the advancing foe. Instead of a pleasant artistic and military promenade to the historic Kremlin, with its Byzantine and Italian renaissance curiosities, it was for the commissariat a campaign of hard work, of privations, of responsibility, and of daily reproach and objugation from marshals and generals of ill-fed and complaining troops. To add to his discomfort, near Krasnoi his carriage was plundered, with the loss of four thousand francs of effects.

In the midst of his very arduous duties Beyle applied to the great masses and variety of men whom he saw in this campaign some of those observations with which he occupied himself when in Paris. As we have already seen, one of his favourite authors was Cabanis, the celebrated writer of the “Rapport de la Physique et de la Morale,” a book many parts of which are now exploded in consequence of more recent researches in physiology, but a book which still contains a multitude of fundamental truths, and the most delightful reading to the lay dilettante in this great science of any that we know.

It was on the banks of the Niemen, at the passage of this great force, that the future author of the “Histoire de la Peinture en Italie” made the rough draught of his celebrated essay on the temperaments in that work. There he had an opportunity of recognising that sanguine temperament which is so characteristic of his fellow-countrymen—a temperament which has led to the most brilliant actions in human history, and at the same time to the most awful reverses—a temperament quite opposed to the cool pragmatism of the Saxon races.

From the Niemen the army moved onwards, amid great commissariat difficulties, in the direction of Smolensko; and we do not feel ourselves called upon to trouble the reader with the details of the military operations. The burning of Smolensko by the retreating Russians was in miniature what Moscow was to be when the famous retreat commenced a month later. The

conflagration of a large town in order to hinder the French advance was something quite novel, and certainly very disagreeable to troops who remembered the jolly profusion and compensations that large towns presented in the Austrian and Prussian campaigns. On the 18th of August the dinner-hour was retarded by this fearful spectacle. Shells fell all around; the houses emitted columns of flame; and outside the town, horses and dogs, that had been driven out by the fire, with their neighing and howling offered a concert that was the reverse of agreeable. But such is the indifference produced by war, that Martial Daru and Beyle, being accosted by a colonel, had to hear from this gentleman a full account of the ladies he had admired in Rostock, where Martial Daru had been his successor in occupying apartments. As no dinner was obtainable, the fear of interrupting a man so full of his subject kept them until ten o'clock, when the cannonade recommenced.

At this time the upper town began to burn. They went to their quarters, and found the carriages in the middle of the street, and eight tall houses near their own emitting flames sixty feet high, and sending glowing charcoal on the roof of their own quarters. To save their temporary lodging, they pierced the roof, and setting up half a dozen grenadiers in the open places, who looked like preachers in their pulpits, they, by means of poles kept the roof clear. Three times did the house take fire, and three times was it subdued. General Dumas, Martial Daru, Beyle, and some others encamped in the courtyard, directing the proceedings. At length dinner appeared at midnight, and having eaten nothing from ten in the morning, they almost fell asleep knife and fork in hand.

On the 20th of August he writes to Pauline a few lines from Smolensko, with ink that, in the straits of the moment, he had manufactured for himself.

"I am surrounded with fools who annoy me. On mature reflection, it is the last time that I turn aside from my object *la mia cara Italia*. We have no ink, and I have just manufactured a few drops, which my long letter has exhausted. I believe I may be stationed twenty or thirty leagues from Moscow. The fighting with the Russians continues to this moment."

The material discomforts of Smolensko were the beginning of the disillusion (if one may use such a Gallicism), and of the intense disgust which pursued Beyle during all the Russian campaign. He no longer found any pleasure in official business,

as he had done at Brunswick and Vienna. His dream at this time was, that at the end of the campaign he might procure the Sous-Prefecture of Rome. I can account for Beyle leaving his nice post at Paris in no other way than by supposing that his services in the campaign might give a pretext to ask for employment in Italy. Writing to M. Faure, in Grenoble, he says, "How a man changes ! The thirst that I formerly had for new sights has entirely disappeared. Since I have seen Milan and Italy, everything that I see is repugnant by its coarseness. I am on the point of shedding tears, and in this ocean of barbarism there is not a tone that responds to my soul. The only pleasure I have had is in a little music, executed on a piano out of tune by a person who feels music as I feel high mass. Ambition does not move me ; the highest ribband would not appear to me a sufficient compensation for the dumps into which I have fallen. My soul, surrounded by a fœtid marsh, seems to fly to sunny heights ; and I imagine myself composing works, hearing Cimarosa, and loving Angela in a beautiful climate. I am an orange-tree transplanted to Iceland. I am satiated with Paris, but I delight in the sensations given me by its painting and its Italian opera."

But, although a little hypochondriacised, Beyle nevertheless looked on himself as a stoic philosopher, free from the atrabilious humours and incessant suspicion of all mankind which poisoned the mind of the insane Rousseau, as is evident from the following passage, dated Moscow the 2d December :—

"I read the 'Confessions' of Rousseau eight days ago, and I see that it is solely from not having had two or three principles of Beylism that he was so unhappy. During three weeks he is acquainted with a man who, two years afterwards, thinks nothing more about Rousseau and the duties of friendship. According to the principles of *Beylism*, the case would be thus : two bodies approach each other ; there is heat and fermentation, but this is quite temporary. Rousseau, on the contrary, gave a black interpretation to everything, forgetting that social intercourse is an ephemeral flower, which must be enjoyed with pleasure while it gives fragrance."

Beyle projected passing the winter at Moscow in the enjoyment of comedy, concert, and opera buffa, with the celebrated eunuch Tarquinio in the parts suited to that peculiar voice. Poor Beyle was unconscious of being on the eve of one of the most appalling spectacles presented by the demon of war, in

which he was to hear the hoarse and melancholy roar of the ice of the Beresina instead of the cantilenas of a Cimarosa, and shortly see the magnificent fabric of the Empire disappear like the palace of Aladdin.

Of the presentiment of such a catastrophe there is not the slightest trace in the Moscow correspondence of Beyle.

"Nothing delivers me from the ennui of the society of fools like music. Rousseau says that music abandons the impossible and direct painting of nature in order to throw one's soul into a state corresponding with that which it would depict had it been an imitative art. Music cannot paint with absolute precision a tranquil night, but it can bring forth such feelings as a tranquil night is apt to generate. I am writing this in a small room where a couple of fools are discussing what we ought to do at Moscow, and will not let me collect two ideas." Notwithstanding this reflection, it would appear to most people that, in October 1812, the futurity of the French army was in Moscow a much more momentous and interesting topic than the pretty fancies of Rousseau. The fools of whom Beyle spoke were possibly prosaic fellows, who began to doubt the hitherto supposed omnipotence of the Emperor to get a French army out of every possible scrape.

One of the most curiously vivid scenes of luxury, pillage, and disorder illumined by the flames of the conflagration of Moscow, presented itself to Beyle on the eve of the retreat. The fire waxed greater, more dangerous, and more impressive ; for soldiers that went into masses of streets were surrounded and burnt ; the richest and most luxurious abodes of the nobility were abandoned, and those who had a mind to pillage found no opponent. The fire rapidly approached the house Beyle had quitted, the voluptuous sensations engendered by sumptuousness of furniture were mingled with the idea that it was doomed to perish. The choicest wines in the cellar were to be had at discretion, and richly bound books lined the walls of the chambers. "We saw the club adorned in the French style, majestic in architecture, but redolent of tobacco odour ; and near it a white house, which had the air of being occupied by a rich man loving the arts, if one could judge from the statues, the pictures, and costly works, such as those of Buffon, Voltaire, and the *Gallerie du Palais Royal*."

At the club, they not only pillaged the wine in the cellars, but even the damask napkins, in order to be sewed together to make

sheets. Another Frenchman, who had gone there to pillage a little ("pour pilloter comme nous"), pretended to make presents of what he laid hold of. Beyle's servant was drunk, and stowed into the carriage not only napkins, but wine and a violin for himself. Beyle himself confesses to have pocketed the volume of Voltaire entitled "Facéties." Altogether this scene reminds us somewhat of an orgie of outlaws as painted by a Balzac or a Eugène Sue.

At first the line of French carriages in the retreat went right into the fire, so that respiration was difficult ; but in time they turned round, and General Kriegerer showed them the way out. Beyle was fatigued, and walked on foot, the carriages being full of the servants' pillage ; and they at length got out of the town, lighted by a pyramid of fire, which extended from earth to heaven, the moon appearing above this atmosphere of smoke and flame. Beyle writes, "I needed to be alone or with people of intelligence to enjoy this imposing spectacle ; but what spoiled the Russian campaign for me was that I had to make it with people who would have dwarfed the impressions produced by the Coliseum or the Bay of Naples."

The following letter to one of his friends in Paris, a Madame Doligny, was sent under flying seal for the perusal of Pauline, and a copy of which was kept. It completes the relation we have already given, and was written on the 16th October, three days before Napoleon left the Kremlin to commence the historic retreat.

"I have not had the opportunity of enjoying female society since I was in Marienthal in Prussia. Such has been the destiny of us all. This is paying very dear for the spectacle of a burning city which at night showed a pyramid of fire a league and a half in length. In five days we were driven from five palaces, and ended with having to bivouac outside the town. We were, with seventeen carriages, almost blocked up by burning houses, the horses frightened with flying sparks, and ourselves half suffocated, and escaping with difficulty.

"On our entry into Moscow, we found a charming town and a temple of luxury ; it is now a place of black and stinking ruins, with half-famished women and dogs prowling about in search of food. This town was really unknown in Europe. It had seven or eight hundred large houses that you could scarcely find in Paris, as far as luxury and sumptuousness were concerned ; the most fresh decorations, the finest English furniture, and such a

variety of arm-chairs and couches, that there was not a room in which you could not sit comfortably in four or five different ways. There were a thousand people having from five to fifteen hundred thousand francs a year. At Vienna, these people are serious, and ambitious to obtain the order of St Stephen. At Paris, they are given up to the pleasures of reciprocal vanity until their hearts get dried up. In London, this class place their desires in having a share in the government of the nation. Here in Moscow, where there is a practical government, their only resource was amusement."

What Moscow then was is well known through Lyall and his predecessors. There is a vast fund of sociability and hospitality in the Russian national character, which certainly renders intercourse with this race most agreeable. But probably few people will share in Beyle's fanciful admiration of luxury and despotism as a substitute for the government of an intelligent and patriotic oligarchy, and for those well-secured personal rights which are a guarantee against either dependence on autocratic caprice and official corruption, or that Oriental mechanism of intrigue which poisons all the joys of existence. Personal government is perhaps, even to this day, better suited to Russia than any other form, for in Russia it has at various times shown that it can harmonise with strong feelings of nationality and patriotism in the mass of the population. But that it can be an object of admiration to a Western European is what one cannot agree with. That Russia will at no distant period go through constitutional experiments seems almost certain. The educated class is fully prepared for it; but with so large a military force at the disposal of the crown, and with such rooted and ingrained bureaucracy, a liberal and independent oligarchy on the British model does not seem in the least probable. What will the great coming Russian revolution do? Will it destroy the aristocracy, as in France, or will it leave it standing? Will it befriend or befroe the large non-Russian element of the western provinces? What fearful problems for future solution!

Correspondence from home during the awful retreat that now commenced was out of the question. In vain did Count Daru attempt to alleviate the sufferings of the French army by the restorative power of nourishing food. In vain did the Emperor himself lay aside the imperial baubles and resume the sword of fighting general. The inevitable catastrophe came; the grand army marched daily to utter dissolution. Beyle was provisional

commissary-general at Minsk, Mohilew, and Witepsk. At the Beresina the commissariat had the good sense to cross the river the night before the disastrous and celebrated passage, and to this Beyle attributes the circumstance of his life being saved. His sister had before the campaign sewed double napoleons in the form of buttons to a greatcoat ; but Beyle forgot all about it, and gave the greatcoat, with the buttons covered by cloth, to a waiter at Wilna. That the buttons were napoleons had entirely passed from his memory.

Beyle having been at Moscow so late as the 16th of October, and having arrived at Mayence about the 9th of November, must be pronounced fortunate. His sufferings, if acute, were not prolonged. Circumstances allowed him to take the northern line by Dantzic, where there were large French garrisons, and some relative comforts and resources. Nevertheless he returned to France without money, horse, carriage, or effects. At Mayence (then in France), he writes that he is "in a state of repulsive filth, and on his knees before potatoes."



## CHAPTER XIV.

Arrival in Paris after Retreat from Moscow—Unsuccessful Efforts to obtain Employment in Italy—Campaign of Lützen and Bautzen in 1813—Adventures in Saxony—Controller of the Emperor's Household in Silesia—Serious Illness—Convalescence in Dresden.

ON arrival at Paris, in the middle of November 1812, Beyle tried hard to get employed in Italy, but without success. This was a time when no favouritism could be dreamt of, and when the whole nation, from the highest to the lowest, had to brace up its energies for the tremendous work of 1813. Everybody was out of humour. Marshals and ministers, formerly profuse of favours, were now greedy to get work out of all capable to work. Napoleon himself had to bear with the sarcasms of those who found that he was a bad gardener, having "*laissé gâler-ses grénadiers et flétrir ses lauriers.*"

On the 18th February 1813, Beyle wrote in strict secrecy to Pauline that he expected one of the two missions which were to be given away. One to the Hanseatic capital, Lübeck, and the other to Rome. He would have infinitely preferred the latter. His business would have been to prepare "for illustrious travellers." But he had a great chagrin on his mind at this time: he was in such pecuniary straits that he had to borrow money at nine per cent. This he found "horrible," and he suggests that his father might borrow or mortgage for him at five per cent. It was to secure the title of Baron for his father that he thought this temporary sacrifice might be made. He did not complain of want of affection on the part of his father, but a want of enlightened tenderness ("*tendresse éclairée*").

We must excuse the want of enlightened tenderness in the father, who was himself not much at his ease in money matters, and had arrived at the age of prudence. But we also pardon Beyle his illusions. He had risen in the world, and now was pursued by those bespattered candidates (*solliciteurs crottés*) of whom he had been himself one at an earlier period. Like Don Magnifico, in the "*Cenerentola*," he protests his incapacity

to serve those outsiders, immersed in the study of "le moyen de parvenir." He writes to Pauline on the 18th February—

"Tell everybody the pure and exact truth, which is, that I have no influence. I receive five or six solicitations a week, which I cannot satisfy, and which cost me an enemy a month at least; that makes twelve enemies a year. These people say that since M. Beyle is so-and-so, he has acquired an unapproachable hauteur, so that he no longer knows his friends. In order to counterbalance this, whenever you receive a letter from me, give my compliments and remembrances to everybody you come across."

It must be remembered that these little personal matters were written under the seal of the strictest secrecy. I have reproduced them after a lapse of sixty years, and after the death of all the parties concerned, in order to throw the greatest light on the inmost corners of the mind of a man of rare and gifted genius. Judging Beyle's life as a whole, his nature was not ignoble or untruthful.

No doubt against his will, and in consequence of superior orders which could not be disobeyed, Beyle, in April 1813, started for the campaign of Germany. On the 18th, Napoleon had already reached the banks of the Saal. Beyle had not yet quitted the French frontier. At St Averd he writes, on the 21st April, to his sister, a few days before Napoleon fought that battle of Lützen which had such indecisive results, and in which he lost Marshal Bessières, one of the most useful and reliable of his lieutenants—

"I never felt so sad, my dear little woman. I am about to see once more men and things of whom and of which I am more than satiated. My departure has appeared sufficiently extraordinary to everybody, and everybody has pitied me, but will forget me in a fortnight. My Russian absence having lasted seven months, I was already a little forgotten. The present absence, after a residence of two and a half months in Paris, will augment the estrangement from my acquaintances. I have written that I desired to be employed at Rome or Florence. I am travelling with the coarsest simpleton you can imagine. When I am reading he interrupts me to ask about every building. At St Menchould, pointing out the tower of the castle, he asked me to whom it belonged. These are the animals that I must put up with for six or eight months.

"All the roads are covered with troops."

Nearer the conflict of the armies, we have another portrait

which is still more piquant—that of another of his companions, who was the reverse of the rough gentleman above described :—

“P—— is one of those extremely feeble souls, that, endowed with a little sensibility, and much facility to console themselves for the want of successes of vanity in society, by a firm conviction of their own merit, form that innumerable amount of self-styled poets with which Paris is inundated. To excel by actions is a much more difficult matter. The said gentleman can strike a few chords on the piano, sings with a false intonation, prates about Mozart and Cimarosa, makes an ode on the battle of Lützen, and finds, with a foolishly important air, and with the internal satisfaction of a pedant, that Alfieri is not a poet. He has a jargon of *douce* and affected politeness, so that M. de B—— esteems him, and says that he possesses literary culture.”

Such is the portrait which Beyle draws of one of his colleagues on the eve of the battle of Bautzen. The Russo-Prussian allies had concentrated themselves at Bautzen, beyond the Elbe; Dresden remaining, with the alliance and compliance of the King of Saxony, the centre of the French operations. Napoleon entered Dresden on the 6th of May, and on the 12th was joined by the King of Saxony. When Beyle arrived at headquarters does not precisely appear; but at Bautzen he was a spectator of that engagement, the result of which was to drive the allies up the Silesian valley, and to lead to that armistice of Plesswitz which gave Napoleon a last chance of peace.

On the 18th May, leaving Dresden at half-past two, Beyle met the King face to face; the country along the Elbe rather agreeable, after which were sandy forests of pine, succeeded by beautiful hills on the right. At a quarter-past ten he arrived at the first bivouac from Dresden, and contented himself for supper with a little bread and wine, and passed the night in the carriage of the marshal to whose corps he had been attached, and who had supped in due form, and had slept under a roof. At four in the morning Beyle's servant brought him a warm soup; and he discovered a background of landscape worthy of Claude, formed by wooded slopes of various shades of green. On the 19th they started at eleven in the morning, with splendid weather and scenery.

Beyle remarked to himself, “I was travelling comfortably, exempt from care, in a good carriage, surrounded by 140,000 men, driving 160,000 before them, but with the accompaniment of Cossacks in the rear. Unfortunately, I thought of what

Beaumarchais said so well, 'Possession is nothing, enjoyment of the possessed is everything.' I am no longer passionately fond of such observations. I am, in the matter of wise saws and modern instances, like a man who has taken too much punch which has made him sick: he is disgusted with it for life. The insides of men's souls such as I saw on the retreat from Moscow have disgusted me for ever with those observations which I can make on those gross beings that compose an army who are mere sabre holders."

Beyle, with his party of commissariat officers, then passed through the town of Bishofswerda, which had been burnt to the ground. Beyle remarked a tailor's sign of the year 1555, a pair of open scissors, just as in modern Germany. At seven in the evening they arrived at the bivouac in front of Bautzen, a rolling fire heard since two o'clock on the right having been caused by General Bertrand's being somewhat surprised by the enemy.

On the 20th, at two in the morning, there was a false alert; but at eleven in the forenoon, Beyle crept forward in order to see the battle under the fire of Bautzen, which was not more than the third of a cannon-shot distant. They got up on a mamelon, with loose pieces of granite, and saw a great movement of cavalry on the left, in the midst of which was the Emperor. "We saw from midday to three o'clock all that can be seen of a battle—that, is nothing at all—the pleasure consists in being a little moved by the certainty that something is passing there which is known to be terrible. The majestic noise of the cannon enters a great deal into this effect. It quite agrees with the impression of a battle if the noise was a whistle; a battle, however destructive, could not produce the same emotions as the noise of artillery."

Napoleon showed all the audacity of his genius at Bautzen; he passed the Spree in the face of the allies posted on eminences partly wooded; and, in spite of an able defence by Blücher and Barclay de Tolly, crowned the heights by the aid of Soult and Macdonald, while Oudinot and Ney occupied the enemy on the extreme flanks. Beyle and his companions being in the plain, saw distinctly this crowning operation by the nimble little French riflemen; and a sudden summer's shower coming on, the situation of the lookers-on was treated by Beyle with some of the literary neatness of Bauchaumont and Chapelle in their immortal tour.

"My companion at the Spree was that same Edward—who had been beside me at the battle of the Moskowa. We were

surprised by a shower, and took shelter under a hut of branches covered with straw, while a fire of musketry proceeded from the neighbouring village. I found in Edward the same spirit as on the 7th September 1812. He related pretty anecdotes *à la* Voltaire, producing the sardonic grin. This gaiety had some enamel that was not very decorous ; for instance, the story of a *garde du corps*, who, having only one uniform, and being surprised like us by a shower, went behind a hedge out of the way of the gendarmerie, stripped himself naked, sat down on the uniform, and when the rain ceased, drew out his pocket-handkerchief, dried himself, put on his clothes, and entered triumphantly into the neighbouring town. Add to this sardonic vein of Edward a disposition to discuss matters of great legislation *à la* Montesquieu, with the philosophic pedantry of the eighteenth century, and you have the two principal traits in the character of Edward. Such a man has a great superiority over M. —, whose mind is occupied with the materials of despatches, and who has none of the current coin of pleasantry, who does not shine in conversation, and whose gaiety consists in his soul being playful and joyous internally.

“We found our carriages in motion ; hence a discussion about returning opposite Bautzen, where we had a very good view of the battle. The spectators saw a great deal with their imagination ; they related their observations of the movements of a square. I said nothing ; and up comes a person who asks them if their square is not a hedge. In truth, nothing is distinctly seen except cannon-smoke.”

At the very time when these quidnuncs were discussing the battle, a man who was kind and friendly to Beyle ended his mortal career: the attached and faithful Duroc, the most intimate of all the Emperor's personal friends, fell on the field of Bautzen. The hard Napoleon, whose heart was generally steeled to all that passed around him, on this occasion could not resist those human feelings of tenderness to which he generally was a stranger. This incident deprived Napoleon of the enjoyment of this hotly contested victory. Moreover, the allies left the conqueror neither guns, prisoners, nor trophies. Their main army steadily effected its retreat up the Silesian valley, and the armistice of Plesswitz, followed by the negotiations of the Congress of Prague, kept Europe in as momentous suspense as the military operations had done.

Beyle was for a short time steward of the Emperor's house-

hold in Silesia ; but his health broke down at the headquarters at Sagan, partly from overwork and partly from the gastric fevers that reigned there, as is often the case in the centre of large masses of men suddenly assembled in localities where there has been no time for adequate hygienic arrangements. Beyle's malady began with a little gastric fever, and went on to such a degree that he thought "he should have the honour of being interred at Sagan." He was astonished how little he was affected by the fear of death, because he supposed the last pains would not be worse than the penultimate ones. During his convalescence he read Tacitus, and all his military acquaintances were full of attentions to him. He attributed his malady to the total absence of the sensations that kept up his system, the fine arts, love, and friendship. Among the causes is mentioned ennui, but this ennui was not caused by vacancy of occupation, for he had an enormous amount of labour to get through ; he had only local clerks, who did not know the French orthography, consequently he was obliged to do everything in French himself. On the 17th July he writes that he had already used eight inches thickness of paper, and that he received forty visits a day, each requiring a decision—a Yes or a No. But he could not fix his attention except in solitude. His dream of perfect existence was a place in which he could have absolute solitude until six o'clock in the evening, and then pleasant society or the opera.

At Dresden, on the 3d of July, he arrived just in time to hear his favourite "*Matrimonio Segreto*." But the fever again attacked him on leaving the theatre. He had started from Sagan in too weak a state, thinking that he would find the arts and solitude in Dresden ; but he had such excessive weakness that he could scarcely read. He found that this weakness made him gay, not being able to think of anything serious. Everything amused him, even the combat of two flies on the window.

## CHAPTER XV.

1813-14—Beyle goes on Sick-leave to Italy—His Social Relations in Milan—Crisis of the French Empire—Beyle's Mission to Grenoble—His Annoyances in his Native Place—His Proceedings on the Swiss Frontier—Fall of the Empire.

BEYLE would have been happy to spend a couple of months in Dresden, but on the night between the 10th and the 11th of August the armistice terminated without Napoleon having profited by it. Dresden was no longer an abode of repose for a convalescent, and Beyle, obtaining sick-leave, proceeded to Italy. He was therefore spared that series of fatigues and anxieties which would have been inseparable from active service during that campaign of Leipsic which decided the fate of Napoleon. While the French and allied armies were in fierce contest on the Bober, the Elbe, and the Saal, Beyle had made Milan his headquarters for the autumn. He also paid hurried visits to other cities. From Venice he writes, on the 8th of October, a letter which describes his Milanese convalescence :—

“MY DEAR FRIEND,—The first years of a distinguished man are like a stunted shrub ; only thorns and ugly branches are visible. Nothing is lovable or graceful in an age when mediocre young shoots are there in spite of themselves by the mere force of nature. In course of time a full-grown tree is seen where the shrub was. I was a mere shrub in 1801, when I was received with extreme good nature by Madame B——, a Milanese lady, the wife of a merchant. Her two daughters formed the charm of her house. These two daughters are now married, but the good mother is still alive. I find in this society a perfect naturalness and a spirit of wit and intelligence very superior to what I have met elsewhere in my travels ; besides, I have been a favourite in the family for twelve years.

“I came to the conclusion that it was there that I ought either to end my days or pass my convalescence, should I be destined to recover, and find the inherent force of youth to over-

come the disorganisation produced by extreme fatigue. I established myself at Milan in a good hotel, and, with the aid of the best medical man in the town, prepared to show a bold front to death. The pleasure of seeing friends tenderly cherished has been more effective than medical remedies. I am now out of danger, and mock the fever, which, however, will not quit me until the warm weather of next summer, and even then will leave me with irritated nerves. But I owe my health to this regime : when I have the fever I retire to a corner of the drawing-room, but then music follows, and soon a sensation of pleasure triumphs over the malady, and I, who had fallen into silence, again return to the midst of the circle.

"I am much pleased with Venice, but my weakness makes me desire to return home—that is to say, to Milan."

To Milan he returned ; and a manuscript note, dated "Milan, the 4th of November 1813," runs thus—"The communings of Beyle with himself on leaving the drawing-room of a woman for whom he had a strong passion."

"I arrive at the public garden at four o'clock, and seeing the mountains crowned with snow, and producing so picturesque an effect on the beholder, I found myself falling into a reverie. I am convinced that I might avoid the unfavourable impressions which I produce in society by reserve in conversation—that is to say, by not seeking to shine. In order to be in reality amiable, I have only to will not to appear so. My superiority is so incontestable [not very modest] that the recognition of it is marred only by my own exaggeration. Society is a coquette, that runs after those who refuse, and disdains those who offer. In the first approaches of intercourse one should not be afraid of being taxed with coldness of feeling or sterility of imagination. The Italians have an exaggerated refinement in the painting of love, forgetting that in dramatic situations the impassioned being has no time for ingenious conceits. This nation, that has felt love with the greatest intensity, has been the worst painter of it in literature."

On the 9th of November, writing from Milan, he projects returning to France *via* Turin and Grenoble :—"I have been leading the most active life in these latter days, and am content with my state of health. The reflections I have made for five months on the verge of the grave have confirmed me in the idea that I must lead an active life, and more for one's moral than for one's physical health ; that one must make a trip of a hundred



leagues every six months, and never put off an enjoyment that can be procured for one single day, were it even that of taking a single oyster."

After Beyle's return to Paris, he, on the 26th December, when the Empire was at its last gasp, received an order from the Minister of the Interior to go to Grenoble, as adjunct to the Senator Comte de St Vallier. Beyle's feelings do not appear to have overflowed with either patriotism or imperialism. What he most regretted was leaving Paris and the Opera Buffa. Reading his correspondence at this time, one thinks of Goethe having the cool composure to write the "*Wahlverwandschaften*" in this very year, when all Germany palpitated for the national existence. Beyle, no doubt, thought the game of the Empire played out, and with Gallic lightness of heart made the best of a hopeless public situation. He had at first prejudices against the senator under whom he was to serve. "I figured to myself," said he, "that a senator ought either to be an old used-up imbecile like Count —, or a dotard full of folly and unreason like Count —. On the contrary, M. de St Vallier received me with true kindness and high courtesy" ("*un grand usage*").\*

At three o'clock in the moonlight morning of the 5th of January 1814, Beyle arrived at Grenoble. On the road his mind had been occupied with what could be done for the public defence; but on arrival at his native town he found the proverb to hold good that "no man is a prophet in his own country." In a document styled "*Journal de mon triste séjour à Grenoble*," he writes:—"How can I describe the fifty-two days I passed in this headquarters of littleness? My reason tells me that one

\* In looking through Beyle's MS. of the unpublished "*Life of Napoleon*," I found the following note mentioning the three occasions on which Beyle was spoken to by the Emperor:—

"This great man spoke to me for the first time at a review at the Kremlin at Moscow. I was honoured with a long conversation with him in Silesia during the campaign of 1813. Finally, he gave me *viva voce* instructions in detail in December 1813, at the period of my mission to Grenoble with the Senator Count de St Vallier, thus"—(the sentence stops with "ainsi" and a comma). How tantalising! From an allusion in one of Beyle's other writings, I suspect that this first conversation was an apostrophe of Napoleon of a disagreeable nature on commissariat difficulties. A sybarite like Beyle, who was inclined to make his official duties the embroidery, not the ground, of his existence, was perhaps rather the wrong man in the wrong place in the Moscow campaign; but he served a man who asked too much from human powers, whether in war or in administration.

ought not to be more little and more foolish at Grenoble than in another town of 22,000 souls ; but I am more sensible of the bad qualities of people whose antecedents I know."

The above-quoted observation does not appear to be very philosophical. Political life bears no resemblance to private life. The Empire, with all its glory, all its crimes against nations, and all its defects as an internal political system, was in the midst of the crash of downfall, and all who were directly or indirectly associated with it were the objects of the vituperation of the day, to be succeeded a year afterwards by diatribes as acrimonious directed against the Bourbons and émigrés.

One of the sources of Beyle's annoyance at Grenoble was a *savant* "whose body and mind were equally small, and whose manners were characterised by the base politeness of a domestic servant."

The person characterised thus by Beyle is represented to have obstructed everything by incessant talk, and who could not understand that the thing needed in such a crisis was vigorous action, and not prolix writing.

M. Colomb, a native of Grenoble, mentions a circumstance which involved Beyle in a certain amount of ridicule during this mission. He was in the habit of attacking with sarcasm the mania of the enriched citizen class to have the "*de*" of the small continental gentry added to their names. In 1810, when an imperial decree made him inspector of crown movables, Count Daru did not wish to write the name of Beyle beside that of his colleague in office, who had the cacophonic but more aristocratic appellation of Lecoulteux de Canteleu. It was suggested to dub the new inspector "De Beyle." M. Daru did not approve of this ; but it was found that his baptismal register styled him as a son of the "noble" Cherubin Joseph Beyle. The son of a noble was pronounced to be capable of being called "*de*," and the difficulty was got over. But when Beyle got to Grenoble, and the decrees of the senator were fixed on the walls, and countersigned "De Beyle," there was no end of sarcasm, as his father had never assumed the name. The public scratched out the "*de*," and wrote up above it, "*Erratum—*A misplaced joke in the serious circumstances in which we are placed" ("Faute d'impression—Une plaisanterie fort déplacée dans les graves circonstances où nous nous trouvons").

In the campaign of France in 1814, Napoleon showed all the resources of his military genius ; but having lost his grand army,

the line of defence was everywhere broken down. While the allies drove him across Champagne, the Austrians traversed Switzerland, and drove the French out of Geneva. Colomb, the friend and correspondent of Beyle, employed in the revenue department at Geneva, was one of the expelled, and had an opportunity of again seeing his friend in those difficult circumstances. Count St Vallier's mission was to give a prompt and energetic direction to the measures adopted for the defence of the territory; and when the generals on the Savoy frontier were absurdly accused of treason by the populace of Grenoble, Beyle, accompanied by Colomb, proceeded to the French force of Carouge, where ten thousand men were charged with the observation of the Austrians in Geneva.

Indignation against the censorious fellow-citizens of Grenoble rankled in the mind of Beyle as he passed through Chambéry, and wrote a few lines to Pauline on his way to Carouge.

"CHAMBERY, 4th March 1814.

"I find myself quite another man since I left the headquarters of littleness. I lost fifty-two days there, without any other pleasure than that of knowing Madame D——, and the reading of five or six anonymous letters. Here the nature of the ridiculous is different. Here we have had an engagement, in which the son-in-law of General Desaix, seeing a twelve-pounder coming *en ricochet*, rudely pushed his father-in-law into the ditch, full of snow, and saved his life."

Beyle also had his own cannon-ball adventure. He occupied the same room with Colomb in the inn at Carouge, when, on the morning after their arrival, a loud noise was made by an Austrian cannon-ball piercing the roof, and lodging itself in the room overhead.

The generals were all at sixes and sevens as to how the operations were to be proceeded with, and Beyle returned to Grenoble. He had, of course, found no treason, but also no prospect of military success against the Austrians.

Beyle now felt it necessary to go to Paris to represent to the Emperor the insufficiency of the means of defence of Dauphiné. But what could Napoleon do for Dauphiné in March 1814? Beyle was in ill-humour with the Dauphinois, and wished himself away. He writes on the 12th March, "I have obtained leave to depart with infinite difficulty, my excellent superior wishing

absolutely to keep me. I will wait five or six days the capture of Geneva. If the proud walls of Jericho do not fall, I will try to glide through the Cossacks, and enter Paris."

This was indeed what he did. He found the Cossacks at Orleans, and entered Paris on the 1st of April, the very day on which the Senate proclaimed the end of the Emperor's reign.

Thus ended a dream of the conquest of Europe. The Italian Napoleon, with the greatest intentions, failed to make a stable French empire. His nephew, the French Napoleon, did make a stable Italian kingdom, without the smallest intention of doing so. The potent who move the wheel of fortune are impotent to fix it. The greatest men begin revolutions in human affairs, and revolutions finish the greatest men.

## CHAPTER XVI.

1814—Beyle Loses his Employments and Emoluments—Publishes his *Lives of Haydn, Mozart, and Metastasio*—Motives for Retiring to Italy—Settles in Milan—His Reduced Circumstances—First Impressions of Milan.

THE catastrophe that befell the Emperor extended\* itself, as a matter of course, to all that surrounded him. Beyle lost his place at court, and the handsomely remunerated extra services incidental to the wars of the Empire. His protector, Count Daru, also fared badly. He had been in 1813 a transient Minister of War, and after the return of Bonaparte in March 1815, he again joined the Empire, and, after Waterloo, saw his domain of Meulan sequestered by Blücher. In Germany his name had been made odious and too notorious by the excessive exactions of which he was the instrument, although it is justice to say that this organised pillage did not, as in the case of a Soult or a Davoust, enter his private pocket. When Blücher found resistance to the exactions of Prussia, he said sardonically, "Ask Count Daru how he managed to squeeze out of us that which we did not possess." The sequester was removed, and afterwards he was judged royalist enough to be put into the House of Peers, through the influence of M. Decazes; but, as a moderate man, Daru was opposed to that extreme royalism which had results so disastrous to the elder branch of the House of Bourbon.

Beyle does not appear to have been greatly disheartened by the fall of the Empire, because although he lost his place at court and in the official body, he was at liberty to pursue those studies that were the delight of his existence; and after the peace of 1814, the first fruit of his "long holiday" was his book on Haydn, Mozart, and Metastasio, or, more properly, "*Letters Written from Vienna, in Austria, on Haydn*, followed by a *Life of Mozart*, and *Considerations on Metastasio and the Present State of Music in Italy*, by Alexandre César Bombet, Paris, 1814."

Such is the odd title of Beyle's first literary essay with the critical public of the French metropolis. He had not yet styled himself in literature De Stendahl, and his personality was carefully concealed, probably because he was conscious that the charge of gross plagiarism could not be denied.\*

This is not a Life of Haydn or Mozart that has the smallest resemblance to known Lives of these men. Beyle did not burn the midnight oil in deciphering manuscripts or in correspondence, or give himself the trouble to go to this source or that source in order to clear up the chronology of this or that event in the lives of these celebrated men, or to order the sequence of this or that composition. With regard to Haydn, he found it more convenient to take the "Haydine" of the celebrated Joseph Carpani, the minor Metastasio of the first quarter of this century, as his groundwork; as if he had said to himself, "I, Henry Beyle, a literary architect of genius, may freely avail myself of the materials for a Life of Haydn brought to my hand by the literary hodman, Joseph Carpani."

In spite of the scandalous piracy of Beyle, which shows itself by whole pages and paragraphs, in substance borrowed without acknowledgment from his more painstaking predecessor, the book of the pretended Bombet is nevertheless a delightful one, *de omnibus rebus et quibusdam aliis*, in which Haydn and Mozart come in for a considerable share of notice, and whose names are an excuse for an explosion of the prejudices, the ingenious paradoxes, and musical ana of Henry Beyle, with some very picturesque and piquant sketches of Vienna in the year 1809, when Haydn died, and when Beyle undoubtedly saw his funeral, and, as the reader knows, was the auditor of the requiem sung in his memory.

Beyle's long holiday having begun with a book on Haydn and Mozart, he now revolved in his mind a lengthened residence in the country of Cimarosa and Paisiello. French official life no longer held him fast. It appears that he might have remained in Paris in a situation in the excise department, but his desire

\* I have only seen the German edition of Mr Darwin's "Descent of Man," but I find in it a quotation from the said "Bombet's" book relative to temperament. In future editions perhaps Mr Darwin would do better to dismiss "Bombet," and print "Henry Beyle." The last edition still maintains the "De Stendahl" pseudonym on the title-page of the Lives of Haydn, Mozart, and Metastasio. I think it is high time to drop "De Stendahl" for ever for "Henry Beyle."

was for liberty and leisure to produce literary matter ; and there can be little doubt that the female attraction in Milan also influenced him. The following note, found in his papers, throws some light on a portion of the motives which, at this period, determined his change of residence. They are styled "Reflections on not finding my name in the list of peers dated 5th June 1814." "Fortunately luxury affects me to a small extent, or rather it embarrasses me. I feel the possibility of living in Paris in a fourth floor, with clean apparel, a charwoman, and free admission to the Français or the Odéon [then the seat of Italian opera]. But vanity and the need of consideration are opposed to this mode of life ; and M. Doligny \* will not receive me in the same manner if he knows that my income is only six thousand francs a year. That would be intolerable ; therefore I quit Paris, which for a long time has given me ennui, and prefer Italy, where, with six thousand francs a year, and two dinners a month at the ambassador's, I can enjoy consideration."

Complex motives, love of art and of "Angela," and some little dose of vanity, appear to have prevailed over prudence, for, as it turned out in the sequel, the fortune which Beyle expected from his father was in a great measure lost in speculations. With a fixed income in Paris, and chances of promotion in an official sphere, it is not to be doubted that Beyle would have found (as other men find by a regulated mode of existence) sufficient leisure to commit to paper the inspirations of his genius. It is probable that many men in this position (Charles Lamb, for instance) have produced more matter, and better matter, from a contrast of mental employment, and from freedom from pecuniary anxiety, than others who are supposed to have all their time at their disposal, and who not being independent in a pecuniary sense, are subject to anxieties relative to material existence. How truly said Scott, "Literature is a good staff, but a bad crutch." In Beyle's time the French periodical press was not developed and remunerated as it is now, and, under the circumstances in which he found himself, a stable position in Paris was clearly to be preferred. The pleasures treasured up for literary production would have saved him from great subsequent disappointment, and, above all, from the fatal exile in Civita Vecchia, where he sacrificed his health, and ultimately his life. I think that I have now fully discussed a question that was often debated by Beyle's relatives and friends.

\* The husband of the lady to whom he wrote from Moscow.

Beyle left Paris in the middle of August 1814; but before settling in Milan he went as far as Florence, where he arrived on the 23d of September; and the future historian of Italy examined Florence thoroughly. He was about to start for Rome, but while making the bargain with the *vetturino*, he "felt his heart pierced," and he returned to Milan. In short, he appears to have been deeper in love with Angela than ever. Rome with all its attractions of art would have been to him "like a bouquet of roses to a man with a cold in his head."

He now practised a severe economy in money matters, dining, at thirty-five sous, at a humble eating-house during his stay in Florence. He writes on the 6th of October, "I have never felt such sensibility for high art, beautiful landscapes, and beautiful objects as since I have been reduced to short commons" ("la portion congrue").

On his way to Milan, he ordered that his eight cases of books should be sent to him, in order to read them over again, and sell some of them. By the way of Bologna and Parma, which delighted him with their art treasures, he arrived at Milan on the 13th October, having expended in these two months in Italy not more than 1080 francs, or £43. In his busy and ambitious days he could not square his budget, but now he found no difficulty in doing so.

"All beings have the qualities indispensable to them. The idlest fop of Grenoble on board a ship on the ocean that might be leaky, would become a model of activity in order to survive. There is philosophy for you! Our misfortunes and disappointments are always the result of desires that contradict each other.

"It rains buckets for four days, but we have 'Don Juan' every evening, and 'La Falsa Sposa,' a ballet of a magnificence of which one has no idea in France. For eight sous a good Milanese can amuse himself, and see superb things from half-past seven to midnight. After a couple of hours I am fatigued, and then pay visits in the boxes. There are saloons for play in the adjoining apartments that are worth 200,000 francs a year to the lessee. People are afraid that, as there is so much piety in Vienna, that this gaming will be stopped, and then adieu to the amusements of the Milanese, who are fond of the pleasures of the table, admirers of the fair sex, and theatre frequenters.

"I perceive that my credit with the fair ladies of Milan diminishes since I can no longer offer them chocolate bonbons.



I had half-a-dozen boxes, but their bottoms having been knocked out, I beg others."

The principal houses frequented by Beyle were those of M. Ludovic de Brême—a liberal ecclesiastic, upon whom the frock sat very easily, who during the Empire had got hold of a bishopric, and now found himself very uncomfortable after the ecclesiastical reaction of 1814–15—and a Count Porro. The former was the youngest of the four sons of the Marquis Ludovico de Brême, by Marianna de Pozzo della Cisterna, and was born at Turin on the 15th June 1780. He was a man of most extensive erudition, and of a lively imagination and relish for literature, and taking an ardent interest in political events, evidently missed his way in going into the church. His father, who was Minister of the Interior of the kingdom of Italy, made him governor of the pages of the Viceroy Eugène; and he was by his literary tastes in close relation with that splendid Milanese circle of which Monti was the patriarch and Manzoni the youngest son. After editing the *Conciliatore* with Silvio Pellico and Leo Verri, and writing comedies which have not survived, he died of languor, at Turin, in 1820, the year before Beyle was expelled from Milan, to the sincere regret of all who knew him. Beyle's acquaintance with Byron was made through this celebrated individual.

The other house, that of Count Porro, was, according to a French biographer of Silvio Pellico, "the rendezvous of all foreigners of distinction in that Italy visited by the highest European intelligences." There were to be met Byron, Madame de Staël, Brougham, Schlegel, Silvio Pellico, and Confalonieri, industrial England and dreamy Germany. There was also, according to this author, another illustrious—'Davis,'—but whether Scrope Davies, or Sir Humphrey Davy, or *both*, cannot be precisely said.

## CHAPTER XVII.

Beyle's Residence in Milan in the Years 1814-16—Theatre della Scala—Beginning of the Career of Rossini—Literary Society of Milan—Monti, Manzoni, Grossi, and Silvio Pellico—Lord Byron's Residence in Milan—Beyle's Recollections of Byron—Buratti, the Comic Poet of Venice.

THE first portion of Beyle's residence in Italy was most enjoyable to a man of his youthful spirits and ready sympathies with Italian art and Italian society. The literary society of the quondam capital of the Cisalpine Republic, the attractions of the Opera of La Scala, then in its zenith, with the early and genial productions of Rossini, the ballets of the celebrated Vigano, and last, not least, the enchanting environs of the Lago di Como, all united to make this, as he afterwards said, the happiest period of his life, and the most abounding in vivid and delightful impressions.

"Beautiful Italy! I am in a sort of intoxication," is the feeling that pervades his life in these happy years.

In the town of Milan itself, the Opera of the Scala was the chief haunt of Beyle. At that time gas was unknown, and those who remember Italian theatres before the gas period, were accustomed to the comparative darkness of the audience part of the theatre bringing out the well-illuminated stage with a greater amount of picturesque effect than with the general glare of gas. The latter is certainly more comfortable, but the former was more picturesque, as old Italian travellers and Scala frequenters may remember. (I speak of nearly forty years ago.)

Speaking of the operatic and ballet costumes, he writes, "What science in the distribution of the colours of the costumes! I seem to see the finest pictures of Paul Veronese. Besides Galli, who played a prince in white, scarlet, and gold, was his minister, all in black velvet, relieved by only the star of his order; and the ward of the Prince, the charming Favre, was dressed in sky blue and silver with white plume. What an air of grandeur and richness on the boards of this theatre! And the

audience part of the Scala is the general drawing-room and rendezvous of the town. 'We shall see each other again at the Scala,' is said apropos of all sorts of affairs"—("Rome, Naples, et Florence)."

Beyle frequently reminds us of Mr Dangle, in the "Critic," who hates all politics but theatrical politics. Beyle interested himself much, not only in theatrical performances in general, but in all the private affairs of singers, actors, and even dancers. Without La Scala it is doubtful if even the presence of his innamorata could have reconciled him to Milan. I need not inform those who have resided in Italy what the opera is, namely, something much more than a mere place for hearing music and seeing a lyric drama, or a ballet which idealises the gesture of some moving accident of history or of private existence. The opera in Italy is the social centre of the town while the theatrical season lasts. It is in her box that every lady that can afford one, or an alternate one, or even the fourth turn of one, receives her visitors, and where not only the musical entertainment, the singers, and the dancers are discussed and criticised, but where the conversation is also general. The Italian method of repeating an opera night after night for half a month, or even longer, has also advantages. It is impossible thoroughly to know either the style of a composer, with its advantages and deficiencies, except on the Italian principle of a dozen of successive auditions. English people who have not resided in Italy have the idea that this mode is insufferably tiresome, but in practice it is quite the reverse, except in the case of an inferior or ill-selected opera, and good conversation is all the more enjoyed when accompanied by music to which one is accustomed. In the *stretto* of a finale, the stage is of course dominant, and conversation must be suspended for a few minutes. The result of all this is, that in an Italian town a roomy and splendidly decorated theatre is not a matter of secondary importance, but is a very great addition to the social enjoyment of the place.

Beyle gives thus his impression of La Scala—"In spite of the want of light, I distinguish the people who enter the pit, and I observe the people salute from one box to another. I am presented in seven or eight boxes, and find several people in each. The conversation goes on as in a drawing-room, the manners full of naturalness, with an agreeable gaiety. Above all, there is no seriousness, and it is the opposite of England, for there are no airs of importance."

This is certainly true, not only of the Milanese, but of Italians in general; they are free from all affectation, and full of natural politeness. They are exceptionally, and not habitually, hospitable, as the Northern nations are, even with their own intimate friends (as for the crowds of foreigners that go to Italy, it would be unfair to expect that they should take any interest in them); but when one comes to know Italian society well, its characteristic is that of easy intercourse, and a large amount of social enjoyment with small expenditure.

Catalani gave some concerts soon after Beyle's arrival; but society cried out against the high price of admission for Italy, which was ten francs. Beyle preserved the concert bills, and it is curious to see a musical bill of fare of that period. Rossini had begun that wonderful career which was to make him the autocrat of Italian opera at home and abroad; but although "*Tancredi*" and "*L'Italiana in Algieri*" had been produced the year previously, we find that, except Mozart and Paisiello, the rest of the concert pieces were made up of the now forgotten Portogallo, Pucitta, Crescentini, and Millico. In every Italian concert ten years later, at least three fourths of the pieces would be Rossinian.

According to Italian custom, card-playing was common in the boxes of the Scala. Beyle says, "The Italians having the misfortune to have no vanity; they carry to excess their disputes at play, so as to make the pit cry out 'Silence.' In spite of the offensive epithets exchanged at the card-table, there is no question of real anger; it is merely the burlesque vivacity and impatience of two men who are pleased to make children of themselves for a moment."

It is at the Corso that wealthy Milanese display their horses and equipages, but the richest have no unnecessary servants or superfluous horses, that eat their heads off; economy is the rule. But on their houses, which remain and endure, and from which satisfaction may be had at every hour, they freely spend their pecuniary funds. Beyle says, "I have been introduced to several rich Milanese, who have the happiness to be engaged in building. I found them on their ladders, as full of zeal as a general directing a battle, and I also mounted the ladders."

Beyle was enchanted with the Milanese style of beauty, which he declares to be such as to inspire rather noble passions than frivolous gallantry. At the balls in the magnificent apartments of the Casino or club he made a review of the toilettes, and observed that the Milanese are not passionate dancers like his French compatriots. At this ball he met the celebrated romance

writer Tommaso Grossi and the poet Monti. Manzoni was absent, and it was said to Beyle that his devout tendencies prevented him from joining in the pleasure-seeking throng. He was then translating into Italian Lammenais' "Essay on Indifference in Matters of Religion."

Beyle's delight was the public garden in the late autumn, with warm russet tints, and the cool snowy hues of the Alps in the distance. As above stated, he usually passed the evening at the Scala. Of Rossini he remarks, speaking of his secondary productions, that he was an idle man, who robbed the impresario or manager, and stole from himself; but he adds naively, "There are so many virtuous and conscientious musicians who make me yawn." In the box of Monsignore de Brême, an old prelate of literary tastes, Beyle used to establish a sort of exchange, receiving information on Italy, and relating French anecdotes of the Emperor Napoleon and the Bourbons. Of Monti, who used to frequent this box, he says, that "he is the greatest living Italian poet, but without logic; in anger his eloquence is sublime. He is the Dante redivivus of the eighteenth century, who despises the monarchical delicacy of Racine."

One of the resources of Beyle was to ramble through the principal streets of the town, certainly a much more interesting occupation in Italy, with its old, varied, and picturesque architecture, each building having a native and indigenous stamp, than in those cities of the London, Berlin, or New York pattern, where one parallelogram resembles another as brick resembles brick. Such a promenade is, moreover, in a warm climate, agreeable, from the narrow streets and high houses, which exclude the sun-glare and heat.

"A Spanish officer, full of genius, said to me at Altona, 'When I arrive in a town, I asked a friend to inform me who are the twelve richest men, the twelve prettiest women, and who is the most abused man of the town. Therefore first I make the acquaintance of the most abused man, then of the prettiest women, and then of the rich people.' Now that I have a little followed this plan, my pleasantest occupation is to saunter [*flaner*]. Leaving the Scala, I pass with respect before that police office which is omnipotent to me, for it can make me start off from Milan at a couple of hours' notice, but the officials of which I have always found to be very polite to me. I then look at the print-shops, and if I find anything of Anderloni or Garavaglia, I have great difficulty in not buying it. I then

arrive at the Duomo, and the engravings having already worked me up to artistic impressions, I indulge my admiration of this fortress of marble. I then go into the street of the Mercanti d'Oro, where the living beauties attract me from the Duomo ; and the engravings having driven all pecuniary interest and disenchanting ideas out of my head, I am rendered more sensible of beauty. Leading such a life, one can always be happy with two hundred louis d'ors a year ; it is in sauntering thus that I get an idea of Lombard beauty, which is one of the most charming that ever a great painter rendered immortal—such a painter was Correggio, when he limned the beauty of Romagna, or Andrea del Sarto, who painted the fair of Florence."

Like every other large town of Italy, Milan has its collection of pictures, but that of the Brera, as most travellers may have observed, is, although in many respects interesting, yet not on the highest level. There is the "Abraham and Hagar" of Guercino, and some fine specimens of that magnificent portrait painter Morone, who, in that line of art, is worthy to be mentioned with Titian and Van Dyck ; but the Brera, as a general Italian collection, is much inferior to the Pitti of Florence, and is still less in possession of such exquisite gems of expression as that of the Vatican, or of colour like that of the Academia of Venice. The great prominence which Beyle gave to the life of Leonardo da Vinci in his subsequent "History of Italian Painting," was, no doubt, in consequence of his lengthened residence in the capital of Lombardy. The Brera was a favourite resource in rainy days ; and Beyle, attracted to the collection of plaster casts, made the excellent observation, that "Michael Angelo's eyes were always fixed on hell ; on the contrary, Canova's on what was gentle and pleasing."

One of the great pleasures of Beyle was the literary society of Milan, which, after the fall of the French Empire, was undoubtedly the best in Italy ; and Milan remained what it had been during the first fourteen years of the century, its literary capital ; and as a musical capital, it divided the palm with Naples both as regards musical production and musical execution. If "Elisabetta," "Mosé," and "Zelmira," were produced in Naples, "Otello" and "Gazza Ladra" saw the light in Milan. If Bellini was educated in the Conservatory of Naples, which is to this day proud of the science of a Leo and a Porpora, on the other hand, "Il Pirata," "Norma," and other celebrated works, were produced at the Scala. The mechanical and mercantile departments of Italian

opera music have to this day their chief seat in Milan. There Ricordi has printed and published his countless editions of the music of Rossini, Bellini, Donizetti, and others; and Milan is the usual residence of by far the greatest number of the opera-singers in disposability, whom the agencies of that city and of Bologna despatch on occasion to all the opera-houses of Europe and America. If a new opera is to be produced in any provincial town of Italy, however remote from Milan, the music is almost sure to be hired for that occasion in the Lombard capital.

The literary men who adorned the society of Milan at the time when Beyle resided in it bore names which have stood with success the wear and tear of time, that slow destroyer of all flimsy reputations. Besides Monti and Manzoni, there were Tommaso Grossi, Silvio Pellico, and others. Tommaso Grossi was an attorney's clerk in poor circumstances. Silvio Pellico was then beginning his career with his "*Francesca da Rimini*," and made scarcely twelve hundred francs a year as a teacher of youth, and was obliged to be indebted to a patron to get "*Francesca*" printed. Beyle says, "M. Pellico has intrusted me with the manuscripts of three other tragedies, which seem to me more tragic and less elegiac than '*Francesca*.' Pellico paints love better than Alfieri, which is not saying much, for in this country it is music that is in possession of this function." Unfortunately Pellico's successes were successes of esteem, that brought nothing to the pocket; even Monti's poems, which went through so many editions, cost him money; for immediately after their publication in Milan there were pirated editions in Turin, Florence, Bologna, and other towns outside the Lombard-Venetian territory. Compare this with the gains of the Scotts or Byrons, or even of those of less popular poets: they must have appeared almost incredible to an Italian poet of that period.

Beyle found that Manzoni was almost a Byron in power of expression, and in freedom and independence of thought quite the reverse of "M. de Fontanes, rubbing his forehead in order to be sublime, and then going to the Ministry in order to be created a baron."

The Italian poets were certainly much less favoured than M. de Fontanes, who, besides being overwhelmed with pensions and decorations, was, if I am not mistaken, made a count of the Empire. Had he not been a respectable poet and a most amiable and kind-hearted man, the august sonority of his official addresses to Napoleon would not have preserved him from ridicule.

Beyle was acquainted with both Byron and Shelley, and met the former at Milan in 1816. Both Byron and Beyle were cordial haters of the British Government of that period, and beside their literary tastes, their acquaintance had a good foundation in thinking the same way of the dominant power in England, which, as administered by the Sidmouths and Bathursts of our younger days, must have been a capital subject of conversation for such free-thinking and pungent critics as Byron and Beyle.

One evening a young man of rather small proportions entered the box of Monsignore de Brême with a limp. "This is Lord Byron, gentlemen," said the proprietor of the box to his guests. Such was the occasion on which Beyle made Byron's acquaintance. Beyle mentions that the Milanese had a prejudice against the English in consequence of their holding aloof from people that addressed them, so that there was at first not much disposition to enter into conversation with Byron; but the ice was broken, and they subsequently had much conversation. Beyle, with his Bonapartism, was very Anglophobe, so as to represent rather too faithfully the grossly absurd ignorance and prejudice which beset most Frenchmen in the years that followed 1815. One evening Byron talked thoughtlessly of the immorality of the French nation (which, in conversing with a Frenchman, showed a want of tact), on which Beyle talked to him of the hulks in which French prisoners were tortured, the death of the Emperor Paul of Russia, which happened so conveniently for English interests, the infernal machine, &c., &c. It appears that Byron received this broadside with perfect good humour, and was probably more amused than offended when such frightful crimes were unceremoniously attributed to Pitt, Dundas, and Rose. Beyle's weak point appears to have been the recollection of having made the retreat of Moscow. It comes in, in season and out of season, like Uncle Toby's reminiscences of the siege of Namur; and when Byron questioned Beyle on the moving accidents of the celebrated retreat, he appears to have been mollified, and the perusal of "*Childe Harold*" having called forth the warmest admiration of Beyle, their acquaintance was consolidated.

But Beyle was not on his knees before Byron, as if he had been an idol, like thousands of others, whose admiration of his magnificent verses made them blind to all the personal defects of the man; and Beyle tells us roundly that those who saw him close at hand considered him haughty, and even a little mad. He never forgot that he was a peer, so that once he reminded M. de



Brême of the notorious and ridiculous saying of M. de Castries, who, shocked at the consideration shown to D'Alembert, said, "Cela veut raisonner, et cela n'a pas mille écus de rente!" Like Rousseau, he was always occupied with himself, and with the effect he produced on others; and in literature Beyle considers him the least dramatic of poets. On the other hand, Beyle admits that when Byron forgot himself, and the conversation fell upon literature, there issued from him a torrent of ideas and of brilliant thoughts which delighted the auditors. In his printed prose he attempted wit, and often fell into conceits; on the contrary, in these literary conversations, there was no talking for effect, or any attempt at neatness of expression. In spite of this eulogy, Beyle reckons that a third of his time he appeared to be deranged in his intellect.

Lord Byron had a relish for the society of Milan, but many ladies were displeased that he did not seek to be presented; he preferred the philosophical and literary discussions in the box of M. de Brême. "Our arguments," says Beyle, "were launched with such energy, that sometimes the indignant pit imposed silence on us."

One night Silvio Pellico told them that Dr Polidori, the travelling companion of Byron, was arrested in consequence of his having objected to the bearskin shako of an officer in the pit, which interrupted his view of the stage. Byron, Beyle, Monti, and the other occupants of M. de Brême's box, descended to the guardhouse, where they found Polidori with a red face in high dispute about his arrest. Various persons of note having written their names as guarantees for him, Polidori was released, but obliged to quit Milan in twenty-four hours. Beyle says that though having an Italian name, he was born in England, and was a man who constantly needed to vent his ill-humour on somebody. Beyle gives as the end of him, that some time afterwards he committed suicide.

This same Polidori informed Beyle that the mother of Byron was of short stature and very fat. It was then known at Milan that Byron wished to avoid a similar obesity by artificial methods, for at that time the successful Banting cure was unknown. Beyle says that Byron wished to rival Brummel in external elegance. Beyle thought Brummel's existence to be one of the most curious ones of modern times. "This dethroned monarch is finishing his life at Calais." Unhappy Brummel! Caen and its hospital were in reserve for him.

Byron's lodgings were half a league from the Scala, and Beyle wonders that he was not robbed. At that time in winter, when passengers were muffled with cloaks, it was the custom for foot-pads in lonely streets to clap a barrel girder over the shoulders from behind, so as to pinion the arms and rob more easily. He worked much at night, often closely condensing the poetry he had thrown off in the morning.

Byron's musical sensibility is declared by Beyle to be that of a beginner, and he thinks that if Byron had persevered in hearing certain operas for a year or two, he would have been delighted with things that in 1816 gave him no pleasure. This appears to be an erroneous opinion. Byron exhaled his soul on his poetry; in his correspondence there are no traces of his having had the real musical faculty. Nor do we ask it. Do we complain that Beethoven was not a judge of pictures, or that Mozart was not a metaphysician?

Byron certainly was unequal and the child of impulse. One day that he went with Beyle to visit the echo of Simonetta, which repeats a pistol-shot thirty or forty times, he was charming, like a child full of gaiety; but next day, at a dinner-party given by M. de Brême, he was as sombre as Talma in "Nero." Byron did not come up to Beyle's idea of a real dandy, that is to say, a perfectly blasé and indifferent person. He might seek elegance of costume, but he wanted the self-command for a real dandy. Beyle forgot his own cynicism whenever he saw his genius awakened. On these occasions, says Beyle, "the poet soared to the heavens, and bore us aloft with him on his pinions."

Beyle describes a dinner-party at which he met Byron with Monti. They talked of poetry, and were of opinion that the dozen best verses of the last hundred years were those beginning the "Mascheroniana" of Monti, on which Monti recited them for the edification of the company. But when they came to compare Alfieri's and Schiller's tragedies, Monti, so felicitous as a practical poet, offered such strange arguments on the theory of this art, that Byron said in English to Beyle, "He does not know *how* he is a poet."

Beyle certainly was a judge of poetry, and also a very acute observer of individual character; hence there was no stinting of his admiration of Byron the poet, but at the same time he maintained that, in the prosaic moments of life, Byron was a very ordinary personage, full of petty vanity and a puerile apprehension of appearing ridiculous. Beyle thinks that the fundamen-

tal misanthropy of the man had been increased by the hostile spirit of English society. His friends remarked that the more he lived with the Italians, the more he became happy and good. But these same Italians could not understand that this great poet should think more highly of himself as a Norman Byron, than as the author of "Parisina," and "Lara."

The comic poet of Venice, Buratti, was then in his native city of the lagunes, but Silvio Pellico and all the rest of the clique were admirers of his satires, and not the less so that they were in the Venetian dialect. Pellico said, "Of the ten or twelve Italian dialects, the knowlege of which has not passed the Alps, the prettiest is the Venetian." According to Beyle, the very free satires of Buratti suggested to Byron not only "Beppo," but also "Don Juan," and he declared Venice, where melancholy is mocked at, to be a world apart in this dull Europe.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

Tour through Italy—Correggio—Bologna—Goes by Florence and Rome to Naples—Meeting with Rossini—Henry Brougham.

BEYLE'S residence at Milan was varied by a tour through the principal towns of Italy, and his admiration of Correggio breaks out on visiting the town which gave birth to the charming "Allegri." On his way to Bologna he writes, "Yesterday I went out of my road to visit Correggio. Here was born, in 1494, the man who, by his colours, has known how to render certain sentiments to which no poetry can attain, and which, after him, Cimarosa and Mozart have known how to transfer to paper. I remarked in the streets of Coreggio, physiognomies of women that recall the Madonnas of this great painter."

One is so accustomed to certain comic strains of Cimarosa, that the above juxtaposition of Correggio and Cimarosa appears odd. But it is evidently not the "Matrimonio Segreto" (the best known article of the baggage of Cimarosa that has passed to posterity), but the now obsolete serious operas of Cimarosa that are here meant. As to Beyle's theory generally, it must be accepted with reserve, for each art has its peculiar vehicle, and the limits of its sphere. Music to a musically organised man may produce more elevated moods of the soul than the finest verses of Dante or Shakespeare; but it cannot, like painting, produce a distinct image to the eye, or, like poetry, impress the inner vision with impressions equally distinct; and music is to one half of mankind only a pleasant noise, to some eccentrics a positive annoyance. Goethe would no doubt say that is the fault of the eccentrics, and not of music. Be this as it may, each art has its own vehicle and sphere, and need not be elevated at the expense of another art. The spectator of the "St Cecilia" of Raphael believes himself for the moment before the most poetical creation of human genius; but he goes home, and perusing an act of "Macbeth," says to himself, "Variety is charming."

At Bologna, Beyle was introduced to the celebrated Cardinal

Mezzofante, then an abbate, by Shelley the poet ; and Beyle remarks, that although he speaks so many languages, "he is not a fool." Surely there is some little want of justice and logic in this pleasantry ; for a man may learn by heart many words, and may repeat Homer by rote, and yet be a pedant. But a man cannot master a large number of languages, which is not so much a matter of memory as of intuition in analogies, without considerable mental power. Shelley is called by Beyle "this great poet, this extraordinary man, so good and so calumniated, whom I had the honour to accompany, told me that Mezzofante spoke English as well as French."\*

Beyle amused himself well at Bologna, where at the head of society was the Cardinal-Legate Delante, a man of high birth, most pleasing manners, full of intelligence, and as much playfulness of intellect as the position permitted. He said to Beyle, "When a Frenchman meets a cardinal, he never fails to paint this prince of the Church as firing off two or three very atheistical observations, and then going to take an ice beside his mistress."

One night Beyle found no less than nine Englishmen at the cardinal's ; seven were dummies, and the two others spoke for everybody, abusing the Italians and Bonaparte. Beyle says that "these men formed a sort of spectacle for the cardinal and his court."

This one can easily understand : the real genuine native John Bull, with all the national and old Tory prejudices of that day, taken from his foxhounds and his sea-coal fire, and transferred to the centre of Italy, must have been amusing to Italian priests, all polish and *finesse*, and disgusting to French Bonapartists. Beyle adds, "I see that since Lord William Bentinck's proclamation to the Genoese, English virtue passes here for pure hypocrisy" (*tartufferie*).

Beyle quitted Bologna with regret, for he found it to be a place of intelligent people, but with much more of the real Italian intrigue and *furberia* than in Piedmont and Lombardy, where a relative sincerity prevails. It would appear that Beyle and the cardinal vied with each other in compliments which have not the air of being very sincere. The cardinal said that Paris was the capital of the world, for a man who mounts the tribune there

\* In one of Beyle's wills he expressed a wish to be buried near Shelley, and in the same testament declares himself to be of "the Reformed Faith!"

becomes known to Europe ; and he speculated on what Rome would be in a century if so free-thinking people as the French retained their predominance. Beyle was equally an admirer of Rome, although he remarks to himself that a Roman is as susceptible of flattery on the topic of Rome as a vulgar Frenchman is on the glory of the French armies (*la gloire, la victoire, &c.*). Beyle coolly told the cardinal that Rome had been "twice the mistress of the world, under Augustus and Leo X., and that he admired the second epoch more than the first.

To make out Rome the mistress of the world when two such men as Luther and the eighth Henry were on the eve of their activity, was not very felicitous. The whole scene must be looked on as a compound of insincerity and good humour, such as one might find in "Gil Blas" or Casanova.

After visits to Florence and Rome, the results of which are to be found chiefly in his works on art, he proceeded to Naples, and at Terracina for the first time fell in with Rossini. But we must let Beyle speak for himself.

"At Terracina, in the magnificent inn built by that Pius VI. who knew how to reign, we were asked to sup with the travellers arrived from Naples, and among them I remarked a fair, handsome man, slightly bald, of five or six and twenty. I asked him what news of Naples and of music, and if I could be in time to hear the 'Otello' of Rossini, the hope of the Italian school, &c., &c. The young man was embarrassed, and the travelling companions smiled. It was Rossini himself. Happily I spoke neither of his idleness nor of his plagiarisms. He told me that Naples wanted a different sort of music from Rome, and Rome from Milan, and that 'Otello' had been only a half success. This poor man of genius interested me, although he is gay and happy ; but what a pity that there is no sovereign to give him two thousand crowns a year, so as to await the hour of inspiration ! How can we severely criticise an opera composed in so short a space of time, cheek-by-jowl with the noisy kitchen of an inn, and written with muddy ink in an old pomatum pot ? I asked him whether, for his own taste, he preferred 'L'Italiana in Algieri' or 'Tancredi' ? Rossini answered me, 'I prefer "Il Matrimonio Segreto."' We remained drinking tea until midnight. The pleasantest of my Italian soirees was produced by the gaiety of a happy man. I quit this composer with regret. Canova and he are, thanks to governments, all that this land of genius possesses."

This chance meeting has the air of being a little painted up, but it is scarcely correct to say that Canova and Rossini were all that Italy possessed as a land of genius. Beyond the Alps there were Cherubini and Spontini, and in the field of literature Italy possessed Manzoni, Monti, Ugo Foscolo, and Silvio Pellico. Italian painting was certainly without a single adequate representative, but in sculpture, Bartolini, without approaching the supremacy of Canova, produced several works bearing the undoubted stamp of Italian genius.

At Naples the great attraction for Beyle was of course the Theatre of San Carlo. But he did not acclimatise himself here as he did at the Scala of Milan. The pompous titles written on the box-doors, the presence of the King, which then regulated the applause of the audience, and the showy equipages which blocked up the street outside, were not to the taste of Beyle, and he declares his preference for the large towns where there is no court. He says this not with reference to the sovereigns of small states themselves, but on account of the ministers and others, who, having the work only of a prefect, have the zeal of cabinet ministers.

Beyle speaks of a ball given by Monk Lewis at the house of his sister, a Mrs Lushington, at which he danced a Scotch reel, and he is full of admiration of the British beauty then at Naples. At Pompeii he notes the vivid pleasure of seeing face to face that antiquity on which people have read so many volumes. Beyle had gone through his classics in youth, but evidently the ancient Roman period interested him much less than the age of the revival. A Galeazzo Visconti, a Cosmo de' Medici, a Leonardo, or a Michael Angelo, were to him much more curious and interesting personages than Cicero or Augustus; the thread of antiquity had been snapped. On the contrary, he still recognised in the modern Italians the compatriots of Machiavelli and Benvenuto Cellini. Intrigue, secretiveness, sense of the beautiful, passionate love and passionate hatred, all were combined in the character of the modern Italian.

After a short tour in Calabria, in which he suffered much from heat and mosquitoes, he returned to Rome, and heard the famous castrati of the Sixtine Chapel, but he declares that the singing of these male sopraui is "an execrable charivari, an offensive noise, and a concert of hoarse capons." Beyle did not reflect that, in the case of what might be called a new musical instrument to him, a certain time must be allowed to get over the

novelty. The Italians of the eighteenth century were accustomed to this very strange description of voice, and delighted in it; hence their enthusiasm for the performance of male sopranis, whose names have remained in musical history. I have heard those who admired the singing of Velluti, the soprano of the Rossinian period; all declare that it required a certain effort, in the first instance, to get over the extreme acuteness, which was rather novel than agreeable.\*

At Rome, the conversation of Henry Brougham delighted him. In Byron, Shelley, and Brougham he had certainly specimens of English intellect. Brougham, at the close of the French war, had not yet become the great lion which he was subsequently between the Queen's trial and the Reform Bill, but he had already a European reputation, not only by his brilliant attacks on the "Orders in Council," but by his well-known connection with the *Edinburgh Review*. Beyle was a regular reader of that bold, fearless *Edinburgh Review* of the period of Brougham, Jeffrey, and Sidney Smith, and he declared it in his private correspondence to be far superior to the critical productions of the Angers, Ville-mains, and Lacretelles, who occupied such prominent places in the French literature of that day. Speaking of Brougham, he writes, "The conversation of this great man gives me pleasure, but he does not speak often. The sagacity of the Roman society has appreciated him. The superior men of England have a simplicity and a naturalness of manner that is admirable. With us, a man who has gained a battle always wishes to pass himself off as a politician, and such an individual has the air of a man raising himself on tiptoe to appear of the height of such people as those who become ministers."

At Perugia, Beyle was amused with an English clergyman, who was shocked at the corruption and barbarism of Rome and Naples. Beyle derides his not having seen that civilisation ended in Tuscany, and that the Romans and Neapolitans are barbarous peoples wearing the European dress, and that it was like a journey in Greece or Asia Minor, "only that the Turks were more honest."

With civilised Italy permanently established at Rome, and railways seaming the toe and heel of the geographical boot, this

\* For a very full and amusing account of the Italian castrati of the eighteenth century, see the "Letters of the President de Brosses." The same subject is fully treated by Marx in his "Gluck und die Oper," but with the serious science of the dry German professor of music.



state of affairs is in our generation in course of being rapidly altered. A generation hence, some Italian Scott may paint the Vardarelli and more recent outlaws as the "Rob Roys" of a past century were painted by the novelists of our own country. The transit has revolutionised Cairo and Alexandria; it may do the same for Brindisi. With railways everywhere, no race can remain barbarous. What a revolution has been effected in the northern part of our own islands since the days of General Wade! What would a Bailie Nicol Jarvie say of the Highlands in our days of perfect roads, rails, and steamers, of the savage rivalry of clan innkeepers, and of roving hordes of cockneys marching up hill and down dale in the direction of a luxurious dinner to the sound of the bagpipe, now almost more associated with festivity than with war?

## CHAPTER XIX.

1817—Returns to Paris—Publishes “Rome, Naples, et Florence”—Publishes “Histoire de la Peinture en Italie”—Criticism of *Edinburgh Review* and of *Journal des Debats*—Beyle Returns to Milan—Matilda of Volterra.

IN June 1817, Beyle went to Paris in order to arrange for the publication of the “Histoire de la Peinture en Italie,” and “Rome, Naples, et Florence.” His maiden effort, the *Lives of Haydn, Mozart, and Metastasio*, were merely sketches, although brilliant ones. The “History of Painting in Italy” was a much more serious and independent production, and the “Rome, Naples, and Florence,” if less a work of labour, bore the stamp of a man of fresh and original style, and of much freedom of thought; so that they together gave Beyle, within a couple of years of their publication, a European reputation; that is to say, among those who occupy themselves with Italian art and high literature; for it cannot be denied that Beyle has never been what is called a really popular author.

Beyle mentions in one of his letters that the title, “Rome, Naples, et Florence,” was selected by the bookseller, and certainly does not correspond with the subject-matter of the book, which is an analysis of Milanese society, which he knew profoundly, with his impressions of Rome, Naples, and Florence, with which he was at this time much less familiar. As above indicated, the work is written with great vivacity of style, and notwithstanding his paradoxes and French prejudices, it has such a fund of gaiety and good humour, that it is most attractive reading, and I think much superior in naturalness to the similar book of the much-lauded President de Brosses, in whom the intention to be funny is occasionally too palpable.

The “Histoire de la Peinture en Italie” is a work less of brilliant impressions than of research. To the general reader it is, on the whole, less entertaining than “Rome, Naples, et Florence.” But there are many amusing anecdotes and episodes, and there is much ingenious reflection on the origin of Greek

sculpture, and on the conditions of the existence of art in general, and of painting and architecture in Italy in particular. Anecdotal memoirs of the careers of Leonardo da Vinci, of Michael Angelo, and of some other painters, fill up the most considerable part of the book, which is desultory, and too much without due proportion or distribution to merit the appellation of a history of painting in Italy; but it certainly is a most interesting contribution to such a history.

Bussière informs us that "Rome, Naples, et Florence," was written for Beyle's friends, and originally without any intention of its being printed. This is perhaps one of the secrets of the charm of the book. Didot would not run the risk of printing the "*Histoire de la Peinture en Italie*," and Beyle paid him four thousand francs out of his own pocket for the preliminary expense.

Both works were noticed in this country by the *Edinburgh Review* soon after publication. In No. 64 of October 1819 of this journal, I find a passage in a review of the "*Histoire de la Peinture*," sufficiently curious for quotation. It is described as "the work of a very acute and lively person, who knows a great deal, especially on the principal subject of his book, and who, upon that and most others, thinks often paradoxically, and sometimes affectedly, but always originally. . . . He has certainly contrived to make one of the most entertaining books that have appeared for some time—a book which never tires us, notwithstanding it be none of the smallest; and though it may now and then provoke us by its tone upon sacred subjects, it must be admitted to convey a good deal of instruction as well as amusement upon the topics to which it is more immediately devoted." The review adds, that common report designates as the author one Baron de Stendahl, a passage in whose former work, "Rome, Naples, et Florence," was warmly eulogised by the *Edinburgh Review*, unconscious that the eulogised passage was a literal translation of a passage in a previous *Edinburgh Review*. How buccaneer Beyle must have laughed in his sleeve at finding that the real owner had not recognised his own property so coolly appropriated!

The *Review* adds, "It is certainly very flattering to us to find our sentiments on the literature and manners of the Continent adopted by a Continental writer of great vivacity and high pretensions."

The *Journal des Debats* noticed the "*Histoire de la Peinture*"

in a most flattering manner, and next day, to the inexpressible mortification of Beyle, recalled and disavowed its own eulogies. This certainly was an incident in the life of a man of letters, living on praise which needed the "Triumphs of Temper."

During Beyle's residence in Paris, while making the arrangements for the production of the above-named two works, his friends remarked that he was occasionally suffering from depression, which he occasionally sought to shake off by a forced gaiety. The cause of this was that he had made the discovery that he had been for some time no longer in exclusive possession of the affections of that "Angela" to whom he had been so warmly attached since 1811. But after his return to Milan, another lady, whose baptismal name was Matilda, and whose usual residence was Volterra, in Maritime Tuscany, had inspired him with an admiration of the most intense character. We shall subsequently have something to say of a journey which he made to Volterra in strict incognito to renew the acquaintance commenced at Milan, and which ended with a signal rebuff, which appears to have caused Beyle great annoyance.

Beyle thus describes his life at Milan after his return from Paris. His sister Pauline resided in Milan at this period.

"I read until two o'clock, I take a walk until four, and dine at five; at seven, I pay a visit or two; at eight, I appear in the box of my sister; I am then relieved by some friends, and make visits in the boxes of the Scala until midnight. I then go home, and read until one the Letters of D'Alembert, Montesquieu, and others to Madame du Deffand. The Letters of D'Alembert have made a great impression on me from their *argumentum ad hominem*. In 1764 he was satisfied with seven thousand francs a year, so as to refuse a great place at Berlin, and you, Beyle, who besides have a heart ill at ease, have the effrontery to complain.

"I have always sought not to write like an author. At the end of my grandeur [in 1814], I found myself full of pride and of a tenacious soul, which neither fasting nor prayer could drive away. This pride feels itself capable of being Prefect or Deputy, and the profession of an author seems humiliating. I write in the morning to drive away ennui, and I write what I think, and not what most people think; always waiting until the *Moniteur* informs me that I am appointed Prefect at such and such a place."

It appears that Beyle's friends wished him to break with Italy, and re-enter the French service. But Beyle was not a pliant

courtier ; and he says that he had been disliked by his official colleagues, although he hated nobody. The prosaic drudgery and insincere politeness of the indefatigable solicitor of employment, who generally ends with being successful, was abhorrent to him ; besides, adds he, in one of his letters, "Italy pleases me ; I pass from seven o'clock to midnight in hearing music and in seeing two ballets ; the climate does the rest."

This winter, at the Scala (beginning of 1818), Camporesi, so well known at the King's Theatre some years afterwards, was the prima donna. Beyle considered her voice to be the finest, after that of Catalani, but she was cold and deficient in animation. The ballet-master was Vigano, the greatest who ever lived. Beyle remarks that Shakespeare's tragedies are ballets all ready-made ; a most true observation in speaking of the great tragic ballets of the Milanese school, uniting striking dramatic situations, fervid passion, fit to be portrayed by masterly gesture, and many opportunities to introduce historical pageant and supernatural machinery ; in short, all the supreme as well as accessorial dramatic qualities. The Pallerini was the queen of the ballet, and she was beyond all compare the greatest female mime of this celebrated school. The author of these sheets saw her in 1833 in London, and her performance certainly corresponded with her reputation as "the Mrs Siddons of gesture."

One of Beyle's most agreeable acquaintances in the artistic caste was Elena Vigano, the daughter of this great ballet creator, a man of boundless invention of incidents and combinations suitable for ballets—a sort of talent most valuable in a first-class opera-house ; for a rich imagination and an easy conception of picturesque effect are the essentials of this necessarily most imperfect and one-sided but most curious art ; and these Vigano possessed to an extent which made him a minor phenomenon in the age of Canova and Rossini.

"Elena is the daughter of Vigano, and the sister of 'Otello,' 'Myrrha,' 'Prometheus,' and other masterpieces which I adore. Canova, Rossini, and Vigano are the glory of modern Italy. Elena is the first vocal amateur of Italy ; when she sings, it is '*cantar nell' anima che sente.*' I frequent her house for a month, and hear her sing every evening. She has the soul of an artist, but all the ladies of the city hate her, for she has the talent to unite a society of fifteen men every night, and forty on Fridays ; these ladies are afraid of being robbed of their admirers. My thermometer is this,—When music gives me elevated thoughts on

what occupies me, it is excellent ; if it makes me think of the music itself, it is mediocre."

According to this theory, music is good merely as the zest or accompaniment of mental reflection. This appears to me to prove that Beyle was not a real musical dilettante. Would a man of taste style as mediocre compositions the C minor symphony of Beethoven, or Cherubini's overture to "*Les Deux Journées*," which compel the auditor's ears to follow not only the general effect of the composition, but the charming evolutions of each single instrument, the dulcet continuity of hautboys and clarionet, the full gorgeous thrilling blast of trumpet and trombone, the mysterious murmur of violoncello and double bass, like the sombre shadows of the backgrounds of a Bellini or a Duguet, even to the magic tremor of the occasional hollow drum? No! Music is a jealous and triumphant muse ; she will, and must have, a whole, and not a half, homage from her votaries.

Vocal music of a popular character pleased Beyle ; he is enthusiastic in several letters on the said Miss Vigano. "Elena sings her seven or eight airs in an evening, and the treasures of the 'wonderful lamp' could not compensate me for such soirees." When she proposed to go and give concerts in Paris, Beyle was immediately on the alert to procure her a good reception in that capital. In the height of gaiety, like a young student of twenty, and not like the soured and sobered middle-aged ex-functionary of the Empire, he writes to one of his correspondents :—

"Leap for joy [*sauter de joie*]. I send you the most amiable, the most gay, the most natural woman whom Venice ever produced. In short, I send you two months of happiness and folly—a happy episode in your life." He then proceeds to explain that she was the friend of Rossini and Carafa, and that Paer was the friend of the family of "the lovely and wild Elena Vigano. If you sent me such an envoy, I would embrace you for a fortnight running. My object is to get you to dispel the sense of isolation on her first arrival. Treat her as my sister ; you will find that my eulogies are below the reality."

The autumn of 1818 was passed by Beyle on the Lago di Como, where he occupied a charming room, separated from the lake only by a narrow road, along which passed daily the people of the surrounding villas, mostly Milanese, with a few foreigners ; this said villagiatura of Como being one of the most charming in Italy in early summer and autumn, but in July and August certainly too hot for Northern habits.

His evenings were spent at the villa of the Sommariva family, which is celebrated for its magnificence (but that family parted with it to a prince of the House of Prussia). The evening society in 1818 was pronounced by Beyle to be "very gay, very musical, and very inamorata." He says that he was admitted willingly, and not expected to shine. This life cost him eight francs a day—that is to say, almost his whole revenue; but he found this easy and agreeable existence a strong argument against going to Paris to swell the list of muddy aspirants to employment (*des solliciteurs crottés*).

In the following year Beyle appears to have been under the influence of a strong passion, already alluded to, for a lady whose acquaintance he had made at Milan, and whom he furtively followed (unknown to her) to her dwelling at Volterra, in Maritime Tuscany. Angela, whom he had loved from 1811, and of whom he had a pleasing remembrance since 1801, was no longer thought of, except as having deceived him, and a "Matilda" was supreme in his heart.

He had first gone incognito to Volterra, with a changed costume, and wearing green spectacles; but, in the evening, he took off the spectacles in the street, and at that moment Matilda passed, and, as it appears, was deeply offended, and wrote a sharp letter to Beyle, who thereupon answered her, expressing his disappointment that her first letter to him should begin with "Monsieur," and should accuse him of a want of delicacy. The inference from this is, that at Milan this Matilda of Volterra had listened not unwillingly to Beyle's conversation, which he could certainly make most interesting. In this answer he writes as follows:—

"Ah! madame, how easy it is for the man who has no passion to observe in all circumstances a prudent and measured demeanour! When I listen to my reason, discretion may not be wanting, but I am dominated by a fatal passion, which does not allow me to be master of my actions. I perceive that this passion has become the great affair of my life; all interests and other considerations appear to me to be colourless compared with it. The fatal necessity of seeing you transports and masters me. There are moments in the long solitary evenings when, if it was requisite to commit an assassination for you, I would become an assassin." In short, the crisis was at its height, and he imagined at this time that he had only had three passions in his life; the first, ambition, from 1800 to 1811; that for Angela, dating from 1811; and this third one, for Matilda. Alack! how completely

the Adèles and the Mdle. Viets had been forgotten! In the midst of this transport of passion for Matilda there are reasonings and inward turnings of the speculum, which remind us of the love letters of Jean Paul, and of Bürger's passion for Molly—reasonings which are unconsciously a sort of apprenticeship to his own disquisitions in the book which he styles “De l'Amour.”

“From the moment that I begin to love I became timid. My discouragement in your presence may enable you to judge of this. If you had faults, I would not say to you that I do not see those faults or defects, but I should say that I adore them; and, in fact, I adore that extreme susceptibility which makes me pass such horrible nights. Such is true love. It repels seduction as an accessory unworthy of it, and, with seduction, every selfish captivation.”

In the case of Matilda, who appears to have lived in a college with some relative who was the rector of it, he had a rival in the person of a Cavalier Giorgi; for he makes this reflection, dated Tuesday evening, 8th June 1819:—“This evening there was coolness enough to deter me from again setting foot in the college—jealousy of the Cavalier Giorgi, who goes to converse with her at the other end of the sofa, and on going out, she leans on him with an intimate air. Virtuous women are as capable of being *aussi coquines que les coquines*.”

It appears, that the lady pardoned him his boldness, and was willing to continue acquaintance, but exacted a promise from him that he would never again allude to his love; and he started for Florence, from which city he wrote a letter of repentance, which is as follows:—

“Perhaps, in my present state of disfavour, my writing you may appear inconvenient, but I am anxious about your health. Will you be so cruel as not to write me a couple of words on the subject? But I must make up my mind to anything. Happy the soul that is illumined by the equal and tranquil light of a feeble lamp; in such a case love is not inconvenient or hurtful to others. It is different with the heart that is a volcano; from such a state emanate follies and failures in delicacy, and the end is, that it consumes itself. I am very unhappy. HENRI.”

There is no further record of a renewal of acquaintance with the object of this brief but violent passion.



## CHAPTER XX.

1819-20—Death of Beyle's Father—Musical Society in Milan—Beyle Revisits Bologna—Queen Caroline and her Scandals—Beyle calumniously represented as a Spy—Meyerbeer—Mercadante—Count Gallenberg—Lord Byron—Count Guiccioli.

ON the 20th of June 1819, the father of Beyle died at Grenoble, in circumstances very different from what the son had imagined previously to this event. Beyle returned to Grenoble, where he found that the parent had left a hundred and twenty thousand francs of debt, and two thousand five hundred francs, payable in annuities, to set against the assets ; so that, after twenty days of running and investigation, he found that his inheritance was only from thirty to fifty thousand francs (from £1200 to £2000). He supposed, from the first letters which he received in Italy, that he would have a hundred thousand francs, and this he would have laid out in the following manner :—

40,000 francs on annuity, producing . . .	4000 francs.
40,000 francs in French funds . . .	2500 „
20,000 francs at five per cent. lent on land . . .	1000 „
And the annuity then possessed by him . . .	1600 „

This would give a total of . . . 9100 „

It was afterwards a matter of great regret to Beyle that he had too confidently looked forward to the paternal inheritance as a source of income in more advanced life. Beyle and his father lived so much apart from early infancy, that there does not appear to have been an attachment of any strength between father and son.

In the autumn of 1819, Rossini, after having given his "Donna del Lago" at Naples, came to Milan to bring out the (unsuccessful) "Bianca Faliero." Beyle says that he saw him on his arrival, and that it was his (Rossini's) intention to cease work at thirty years of age. He had at that time already placed one hundred thousand francs at seven and a half per cent. interest in the hands of Barbaja, the celebrated impressario, and now millionaire, ex-coffee-house waiter. Beyle

mentions that in Milan Rossini's social headquarters would be at the piano of Elena Vigano. The subsequently famous Giuditta Pasta was then in Milan, working seven hours a day to acquire that mastery of vocalisation which astonished and delighted us in our younger days, in addition to those noble dramatic powers which made her the incomparable Medea, Semiramide, and Norma of her age and generation. Of the decadent Grassini, who was the queen of opera before Catalani, and the great prima donna during the Italian campaigns of Napoleon, we learn that she was to receive £400 for singing two months at Brescia.

In December 1819, Beyle writes, "I pass my evenings with Rossini and Monti : all things considered, I prefer extraordinary to ordinary men. I pass here for an ultra anti-Rossinian [probably for his publication on Haydn and Mozart]. Rossini is very droll, and has wit [*esprit*]. He composes music as Bombet [*i.e.*, Beyle himself] writes his letters—without knowing how. Schiller, on the contrary, wrote admirable tragedies, containing ideas on the sublime worthy of M. Cousin."

Beyle's admiration of men of genius was not confined to those generally acknowledged as such, but also comprised those who, having made a great impression on their immediate circle, had not attained European fame, and yet called forth enthusiasm in their more restricted sphere. Have we not seen the same thing at home?—the popular Wesleyan preacher, whose name is better known to small citizens of small towns in Lancashire or Yorkshire than those of Bossuet or Channing ; the fluent Cicero of the Northern Circuit, the Hastings of Snugborough, or the unappreciated Junius of some broadsheet in a remote province of the United Kingdom. Few of our readers have heard of Razoni, although not unfrequently mentioned with eulogy, and even with admiration, in purely Italian society of forty years ago. Beyle's sketch of him is distinct and graphic, although overdone.

"Poor as Job, as gay as a lark, and as great as Voltaire, Razoni has an iron will. I place in the first rank of the men I have known, Napoleon, Canova, and Lord Byron, then Razoni and Rossini. He is a physician, an inventor, a poet, and a writer of the first merit. He means to live on literature, and is now translating from the German. His conversation is astonishing, and he has a haggard but superb countenance, with lineaments fit for a cameo. If he was at Paris, he would trouble a little the concert of reciprocal eulogies that your *savants* offer each other with such touching concord."

The reading that Beyle liked most was that of men who had had opportunities of seeing human affairs, and who were at the same time "*non-dupes*." First of all he places the recognised men of genius, and then the sharp shrewd men of the world, such as Saint Simon, Bezenval, and Duclos, although the first was, with his pretensions in matters of futility, in many respects a ridiculous personage.\*

Modern Spanish history was a subject with which Beyle occupied himself at this time. Whether he projected any work on the subject does not appear, but he read through De Pradt *Escoiquiz l'Infantado*, Cevalhos, Rocca, and Azanza. Some time before the Spanish Constitutional outbreaks, there were already signs of Ferdinand VII. beginning to find out that it was hatred of the Emperor Napoleon which had replaced his dynasty on the throne of Spain, and not purely loyalty to his sacred person; in short, that discontent began to brew among his liberal subjects, notwithstanding the eminent qualities of this monarch of pious memory, who had with his own royal hand honoured the ancient craft of tailors by an act of fraternity in embroidering a petticoat for the Holy Virgin.

But the result of Beyle's reading, although favourable to the Constitutional principle in Spain, yet was, in all that regarded the previous French occupation, sufficiently curious to us English people. He is shocked at the Spanish nation not appreciating the magnanimity of the Emperor Napoleon I.; and he considers that the Emperor was "the dupe of his goodness of heart," and this after the too notorious transactions of Bayonne. In a long letter to M. Colomb, in which he develops his ideas on this subject, he maintains that the Spaniards threw away a splendid opportunity in not accepting Joseph as king. It does not strike Beyle that other nations might hesitate to be beholden to Napoleon, as the self-elected benefactor of the human race, for their constitutional liberty. According to Beyle, the object of the subjugation of Spain by Napoleon was to endow a corrupt people with the constitution of the United States of America!

According to our notion, the greatest of all human liberties is the liberty of Europe, when menaced by such traditional crushers as the Napoleons the First and the Nicholases the First; and the most necessary and most elementary of all liberals are those Wellingtons, Blüchers, Von Steins, and Stratford de Redcliffes,

\* What rank will the "*Memoirs of Talleyrand*" occupy if given uncontracted? He certainly was a perfect type and model of the "*non-dupe*."

who have said to those traditional crushers "So far, and no further." The completing and decorating liberals, with their domestic reforms, are welcome to come afterwards, and occupy the second rank; but in the first rank are those of whom we have spoken. The greatest moralist of his age is the statesman who has most fearlessly applied the principles of international law to policies that are aggressive or illegal.

In 1819 party spirit ran high everywhere; in France, where many people were more royalist than royalty itself; in England, the times were out of joint with Habeas Corpus Suspension Acts, and the recent scenes of blood and violence; in Germany, where Kotzbue fell by the hand of a youthful democrat; and in Spain and Italy, where sanguinary revolutions were about to break out a year later. The press, where it was not absolutely gagged, partook of the asperity or scurrility of political parties to an extent that would appear surprising in an age like ours, when a relative amount of sober taste prevails in the leading organs of public opinion. This scurrility and personality was also in full possession of the domains of literature. Not only did the Cobbets and Paul Louis Couriers attract general attention from the power and piquancy of their writings, but the style of a modern *Edinburgh Review* or a *Revue des Deux Mondes* would have appeared apathetic and somnolent to those who wrote in the *Edinburghs*, the *Quarterlies*, and the *Blackwoods* of those days, not to mention the lampoons of the most offensive description in pamphlet and caricature.

Beyle gives literary reasonings according to the fashion of 1819. "This man is not of my opinion, therefore he is a fool; he criticises my book, therefore he is an enemy. He is my enemy, therefore he is an infamous man, a robber, an assassin, a forger," &c., &c. At the same time Beyle was for the complete liberty of the press, because "a collection of bayonets and guillotines could no more stop an opinion than a collection of louis d'ors could stop the gout."

Next year, in March, Beyle wrote a letter to Thomas Moore, with three copies of his "History of Painting in Italy;" and I think it not improbable that he had made the acquaintance of Moore through Byron. Certainly these two gay, sensuous, and amiable men were made to be pleased with each other. They both hated British cant, not with the ferocity of Byron, but as laughing philosophers. Beyle thus writes to Moore, in March 1820—

"The friends of the charming author of 'Lalla Rookh' must be persons who feel the influence of the arts. They no doubt

form a part of the happy few for whom I write, very sorry that the rest of the human *canaille* should read my reveries. Pray present the three copies enclosed to your friends. I have read 'Lalla Rookh' for the fifth time, and am surprised such a book should appear in England, which has been corrupted by Hebrew ferocity."

Beyle was not felicitous in this expression. Puritanism may harden and steel the hearts of men, and remove them from amene arts, but it does not corrupt a nation as excessive luxury, with its accompanying relaxation of the nervous system, is sure to do.

"*Sævioris armis luxuria incubuit,*"

was the motto chosen by a distinguished modern painter for his now famous representation of a nation falling into corruption.

Beyle revisited Mantua, Bologna, and other towns, in 1820, and the account he gives of the Roman administration is positively comic; it might pass for an account of an old Turkish seraglio, with its eunuchs and sultanas. He declares that they have great *finesse*, but that "they would rather pass through the keyhole, than go through the trouble of examining twenty pages of accounts full of figures." The ordinary rent of land was 8 per cent. Loans usually produced 15 per cent., and a man who took only 12 per cent. was considered to act with delicacy.

More than one English observer of Italian economical affairs has been surprised by the very large sums left by Bolognese bankers, but the opportunity for rapid accumulation here indicated accounts for such fortunes; to which must be added the large sums gained by tobacco and other monopolies, and an ostensibly economical mode of living in order to veil such large gains from public criticism.

The affairs of Queen Caroline of England occupied the Italians at this time. Bergami had made his fortune out of her, by taxing all her bills to his secret profit. Beyle says that he had seen letters of four or five pages of her writing, in bad French, "full of fire, of ideas, of pride, and of courage." Beyle thinks that the lax and easy society of Italy would have overlooked her having a handsome colonel for her lover, but would not tolerate the idea of a menial having a criminal intercourse with a queen. Beyle styles her a "*heroine of a corps de garde.*"

It was in this year, 1820, that Beyle experienced one of the most disagreeable incidents of his residence in Milan—a report

that he was the spy of the French Government. He observed that several people did not salute him as usual, and then he received a letter from a friend revealing the cause of this coolness. This affair he considered as a terrible blow. Some people had been saying, "What is this Frenchman doing here?" And Beyle maintained that the Milanese did not precisely understand his philosophic mode of existence; and he thought that people had no right to criticise a man because he lived more comfortably at Milan with a few thousand francs a year, than in Paris with double the money. What most shocked him was, that he was told that if he went into a certain society, several people would walk out. Beyle wrote on this occasion to one of his Paris correspondents, "This is the most acutely felt blow which I have received in the course of my life."

Political life abounds in such unjust and annoying calumnies, especially in countries where hostile secret systems of police are in conflict; and the readiest to utter such calumnies are frequently those who really are themselves guilty of political corruption. Besides the ignorant and incapable, who misjudge a man for having a laudable thirst for political knowledge, there are not a few people who have a positive enjoyment in the exercise of diabolical malignity when it is directed against people whose convictions, however sincere, are in diametrical opposition to their own. In Beyle's case, as in that of all really sincere and straightforward men, the impression does not appear to have been permanent.

In August 1820, Beyle noticed that the Italian public was getting tired of Rossini. Writing to a friend in Paris, he says, "His reputation is more general than ever, so as to have extended to the lowest classes of society, but the inclination returns to Mozart and Cimarosa, or rather seeks novelty. Mercadante of Naples seems to me to be very pale. In October, we will have in Milan an opera of M. Meyerbeer, a Berlin Jew burning with enthusiasm for music—an enthusiasm guaranteed against ridicule by an income of eighty thousand francs a year; but, like the music of Mercadante, that of Meyerbeer produces no new sensations, notwithstanding the best possible intentions. He leads a solitary life, working fifteen hours a day at his music."

This was certainly the period of the temporary decline of Rossini. After the splendid outburst with "Tancredi" and "L'Italiana," he had reached the acme of his second manner in

"Il Barbière," "Otello," "Cenerentola," and "La Gazza Ladra;" but there were others below this high level, and others again, such as "Torvaldo e Dorliska," "La Gazetta," "Adelaide di Borgogna," "Edoardo e Cristina," and "Bianca Faliero," which, having here and there a good piece, were incapable of vitality from the haste and utter carelessness with which they were written. There were, again, considerable signs of the "Ercles vein" in "La Donna del Lago" and "Matilda di Sciabran;" but the real resumption of dominant power was not to be until "Zelmira" and "Semiramide."

As for Mercadante, he was not destined to be a Rossini, but a respectable, and occasionally a distinguished, composer. That he had a happy vein for melody will be disputed by no one who remembers the number of very pretty airs in "Elisa e Claudio," "Donna Caritea," "Didone Abbandonata," and "La Testa di Bronzo." Moreover, we find in his masterpieces, "Il Bravo," "La Vestale," and "Il Giuramento," a considerable knowledge of the resources of the orchestra; but he certainly had not the real force of original genius which Rossini and Bellini had, so as to constitute an epoch. When Beyle wrote the above lines, Mercadante had not taken his place in Italian music. He has now terminated his mortal career; and although a very pleasing eclecticism cannot be denied him, it seems doubtful if his works will live, except in the records of musical historians. His great finale in the "Giuramento," beginning

"Alaisa in queste soglia,"

is certainly written with both science and inspiration, and appears to be his masterpiece. Had he always written on this high level, a robust longevity might be predicted for his compositions.

The earlier part of the Italian career of Meyerbeer was sufficiently "pale," to use Beyle's expression relative to Mercadante. "Emma di Resburgo" and her sisters have not survived. But to every art there must be an apprenticeship; and if Meyerbeer had not gone through the process of writing those forgotten Italian operas, he could not have come out with such splendour as in the "Crocata," not to mention his subsequent masterpieces, which made an epoch in the creation of what is called "grand opera." The fifteen hours a day of work mentioned by Beyle produced golden results.

Beyle writes from Milan in December 1820, more than ten

years before the production of "Robert le Diable" appeared, "Meyerbeer is a man like Marmontel or Lacretelle—some talent, no genius. When he writes a cantabile, he takes a popular air from the streets. He leads a solitary life, working fifteen hours a day at his music, and no longer plays the piano in society, although one of the first pianists in Europe. Rossini repeats his own ideas; he is very corpulent, and eats twenty beefsteaks a day. As to Carafa, one good opera might be made out of the pieces of his various operas. The young Pacini, a handsome youth of eighteen, has made or stolen a sublime duet out of a scene in which Frederick the Great refuses the mistress of one of his officers a pardon for her lover, after being condemned to be shot."

I give these extracts, not for the purpose of unfairly parading Beyle's making out Meyerbeer to be no more in music than a Marmontel or a Lacretelle in literature, but in order to show the sort of gossip current in Italy about men whose fame was then budding. The auditor of "Robert" and the "Huguenots" in after years would, no doubt, have revised his judgment.

One of the best known names in Vienna, when the century was only a quarter old, was that of Count Gallenberg, who in the latter part of the reign of the Emperor Francis was the inspector of the Kärnthner Thor Opera when it had attained the highest European reputation for its perfect rendering of the classical German opera in all its details and accessories of chorus, orchestra, and ballet. Not only were the masterpieces of Mozart and other composers given in perfection, but visitors to Vienna at that time enjoyed the mythological ballets of the Gallenberg period, one of the greatest treats for a dilettante in this entertainment. Beyle was applied to by a friend in Paris for some information about this person, and his answer was given in the following terms:—

"Count Gallenberg is a noble German, born about 1780; he is the first composer of the century for ballet-music, and perhaps the first composer in this line who ever appeared. He is the type of a German composer; science is all in all with him. He cannot perceive when a singer is false in intonation, but he can produce admirable instrumental music. He has produced pieces of pomp and majesty for ballet-scenes representing the triumphal march of a general into a town which he has taken, or a young prince leading the daughter of an emperor to the altar, which have not been surpassed by anybody."



When Beyle makes out the type of a German composer to be a man all science without ear, we cannot help thinking of the exquisite ears that all the great German composers had, in addition to their science. Certainly neither Simon Mayer in Beyle's time, nor Richard Wagner in ours, can be accepted as normal representatives of German composers. Beethoven's writing so much magnificent music after the accident that befell his tympanum shows that nothing could annihilate the mind's ear, created when the physical organ was still in function.\*

Beyle's opinions on literature are worthy, generally speaking, of more respectful attention than those on music. But there are many things in his correspondence at this period with which one cannot quite agree. He falls foul of Byron for his constant praising of Tasso, which, in a professed romanticist, he considered insincerity and affectation. In this he was surely in the wrong. How could a man like Byron, who often produced such perfectly melodious versification, fail to find much that he could warmly admire in Tasso? Byron's real and unfeigned admiration of Pope, and other poets of high polish, was in perfect accordance with his admiration of the "Gerusalemme."

Beyle writes, "Send me Byron's 'Marino Faliero,' who got decapitated. The said Lord addressed a word to a Miss M—— at a ball at Venice, on which Colonel M—— sent him a challenge; but the affair was arranged. The phrase of Byron was

\* The Gallenbergs are a very old Carniolan family, and possess the hereditary office of chief huntsman (Oberst Jägermeister) to the sovereign in Carniola. They were elevated to the rank of count by Leopold I. A book has been published on the family, entitled "*Genealogia Familiæ Comitum et Dominorum de Gallenberg Laibach, A.D. 1680.*" The composer, Wenzel Robert Count Gallenberg, the son of Count Joseph, governor of Galicia, was born in 1783; he was therefore an exact contemporary of Beyle, and nearly contemporary with Spohr, Auber, Spontini, and Kalkbrenner. He received a sound musical and general education; and though it would be unfair to compare him with the professional masters of music, yet he takes a respectable place among the Coburgs, Carafas, Westmorlands, Poniatowskys, and other dilettanti of this century. He lived long in Italy, and after the peace of 1814, composed ballets for the celebrated impressario Barbaja during the run of the operas of the Rossinian period. He composed upwards of forty of these ballets, which had a vogue, not only in Italy and at Vienna, where he in 1829 became director-general of the Kärnthner Thor Opera, but also in other countries. His last years were passed in retirement, and he died in Rome in 1839, aged fifty-six, three years before Beyle's own decease. His eldest son embraced the ecclesiastical career, and the second succeeded him as the representative of the family.

short, insignificant, and arch-decent ; but the breath of the monster was thought enough to pollute the atmosphere of the pale, cold belle. Byron lives in the society of his fat and fair beauty of Pesaro."

Of the husband of the female friend of Lord Byron, Count Guiccioli, Beyle says that he is "a bravo of the fourteenth century, capable of assassination." This is pure fudge. The author of this biography remembers having repeatedly met this gentleman at Madame Benzoni's, ten years after Byron's death, with the rest of the Venetian society of that day ; and the impression which he produced on us was that of a frivolous rich man, very fond of theatrical amusements. He went to the opera every night of its being open ; when there was no opera, he went to the comedy ; if there was no comedy, he went to the marionettes ; if there were no marionettes, he caused some theatrical representation to be got up in his own house, and then finished off at Madame Benzoni's or Madame Albrizzis.

## CHAPTER XXI.

1821—Beyle's Admiration of Sir Walter Scott as a Writer—His Unjust Judgment of Scott as a Man from Ignorance of Scottish Feeling—A Letter of Byron to Beyle vindicating the Character of Scott—Beyle Expelled from Milan by the Austrian Authorities.

BEYLE had a great admiration of the author of "Waverley," both as a poet and as a novelist; but Scott the Tory was an object of great antipathy to him, who was a Bonapartist by sympathy and habit, and a freethinker in politics and religion by conviction. Now and then Bonaparte is called a "tyrant," a "despot," and the "robber of our liberties," &c., &c.; but, as in the case of those whom we love, the almost unpardonable finds pardon after a short purgatory of affectionate disappointment. In short, Beyle was so dazzled by the *gloire* at which he occasionally cynically snarls, that in his eyes Napoleon was a personage quite privileged and apart. It is therefore not surprising if Beyle's strong antipathies against British views and Tory prejudices should break out occasionally with reference to Scott, who was an enthusiastic and convinced Tory of the most ultra hue. At the same time it was not possible that so splendid a series of romances as that which issued from the inventive brain of Scott should not have created the most lively admiration in a man who, from his Italian reading, had much occupied himself with those picturesque parts of history between the dark ages and more modern and civilised times, which have been compared by Scott himself to those undulating pleasant landscapes that lie between the stern and rugged precipice and the smiling plain.

Whether the following letter ever came actually into the hands of Scott is not clear, but the draught of it was found among the papers of Beyle.

*"To Sir Walter Scott, Edinburgh.*

*"PORETTA, 18th February 1821.*

"SIR,—If it should suit you to get in Paris the books of which I have given a list below, I shall have found a manner of

showing the extreme pleasure which the perusal of the 'Abbot' has given me.

"What a pity that the author has not had occasion to paint the Middle Age of this wonderful Italy! He would have found the first traces of the human soul in the direction of liberty. Instead of egotistical heroism and an absurd feudality, he would have found the picture of what the human mind could at that time effect for the general welfare. The ideas of that period were obscure and deficient in precision, but the souls of men possessed about the year 1400 a degree of energy such as we find nowhere else than in Italy.

"Unfortunately, in order to get a knowledge of the Middle Ages, a man must bury himself in dusty manuscripts, which about the year 1650 were garbled and falsified by Jesuits. No writer has sought to produce a genuine collection of anecdotes painting the manners of that period. What would be the enthusiasm of Europe if the author of 'Waverley' were to reveal the life of Cola di Rienzi, or the exile of the first Cosmo di Medici!"

Then follows a list of well-known historical works, illustrative of the close of the Middle Ages and the beginning of the revival. From other letters to his friends, one may see that it was through French spectacles that Beyle looked on Scott as a man with aristocratic prejudices, and he is evidently ignorant that the patriarchal relation which exists in Scotland to this day between landlord and tenant bears no resemblance to that which existed between a French aristocrat of the old regime and the peasantry (*taillable et corvéable à volonté*) of the pre-revolutionary period. Even in spite of the révolutions that have occurred in France, there is to this day, although not in Paris, at least in all provincial towns, a sufficiently sharp line of demarcation between the noble and the non-noble society, to which there is nothing corresponding in the country towns of Britain, where riches, ancient or modern, chiefly determine the gentleman element.

Two years later, in 1823, the Toryism of Scott, and his support of the *Beacon* newspaper, a scurrilous and ephemeral print, along with the circumstance of his having asked George IV. at Leith for the glass in which he had drunk, in order to be preserved in his family, appear to Beyle damnatory of the great novelist as a man. Beyle concluded that Scott was like the herd of toadies and intriguers in a Continental monarchy, as viewed by the outer circle of democrats and levellers. He was incapable of understanding that the Toryism of Scott was quite sincere,

and even passionate. He could no more understand such conservation than a primitive Christian would appreciate the character of Diocletian, or a Calvinist be edified by the homily of a preacher of the League.

Scott firmly believed that if the ruling power in Britain ceased to be in the hands of the aristocratic and country gentlemen class, that the public interests would grievously suffer. When Scott completed his university studies, and entered professional life, France was in the throes of revolution, and Scott formed his political opinions at a time when ninety-nine out of a hundred educated men in Britain looked on the Jacobins as having committed the greatest political crimes recorded in history. Church and king, lords and landholding commons, were in Scott's eyes the guarantees, not only of oligarchical, but of popular interests. That Scott was not a political philosopher is shown by his writings, and by sundry foolish political speeches made at a time when Gatton and Old Sarum were not considered irrational institutions by perhaps a clear majority of the landholders of the kingdom; but of the sycophantic nature which Beyle attributed to him there certainly was no trace, and his preferring such accusations argues an amount of ignorance in British politics which appears not one whit less narrow than the antiquated prejudices of Scott.

Two years later, in 1823, a letter of Byron to Beyle, dated Genoa, the 29th May, is interesting as showing the opinion which the former had of Beyle, and is remarkable for his defence of Scott against the prejudices of Beyle.

"SIR,—Now that I know to whom I am indebted for the flattering mention of my name in 'Rome, Naples, et Florence, in 1817, par M. de Stendahl,' it is proper that I should offer my thanks, agreeable or not, as they are worth, to M. Beyle, whose acquaintance I had the honour to make at Milan in 1816. You have done me too much honour by what you have said in this work; but what has given me as much pleasure as your eulogies was my learning by mere accident that I received them from a person whose esteem I was really anxious to acquire. So many changes have taken place in our Milanese circle since that period, that I scarcely dare recall it to your memory. Death, exile, and the Austrian prisons have separated those whom we loved. Poor Pellico! I hope that in his cruel solitude the muse occasionally consoles him, that we may be charmed some day when the poet will be restored with her to liberty.

"Of your works, I have only seen 'Rome,' the Lives of Mozart and Haydn, and the pamphlet on 'Racine et Shakespeare.' I have not yet had the good fortune to lay hands on your 'Histoire de la Peinture.' There is in your pamphlet a portion of your observations on which I will take the liberty of making some remarks, that is to say, on the subject of Sir Walter Scott. You say that his character is little worthy of enthusiasm, at the same time that you notice his works as they deserve. I have known Walter Scott for a long time, and I know him well, and I have seen him in circumstances which put the real character of the man to the test : I can assure you that his character is worthy of admiration, and that of all men he is the most frank, the most honourable, and the most amiable. With regard to his political opinions, I have nothing to say on the subject ; as they differ from mine, it is not easy for me to speak of them : but he is perfectly sincere in his opinions ; and sincerity may be humble, but cannot be servile. I therefore beg you to correct or to soften this passage. You might, perhaps, attribute this officious zeal of mind to an affectation of candour, because I am myself an author. Attribute it to whatever motive you choose ; but pray believe the truth, when I tell you that Sir Walter Scott is as excellent a man as a man can be, because I know it by experience.

"If you grant me the honour of an answer, be so good as to send it as soon as possible, because circumstances may take me again to Greece, although nothing is as yet decided on the subject. My present address is Genoa ; and in case of absence, your letter would be sent after me.

"I beg you to believe me, with a lively recollection of our short acquaintance, and the hope of renewing it some day, your most obliged and obedient servant,  
 BYRON."

M. Ducoin, in his *éloge* of Beyle addressed to the Académie Delphinale, is fair in speaking of Beyle's misappreciation of Scott. "Marivaux held Molière in slight esteem. M. Ingres makes a gesture of displeasure if people praise Rubens." On Colomb's absurd observation that Scott's reputation had faded, M. Ducoin says, "I confess to not having perceived it. The editions of Scott translated into our language have never ceased to be multiplied. He is read with pleasure, he is quoted, he furnishes subjects to the stage, to painting, to engraving, and to music. Many of his characters remain as original types, known

to everybody. If that is a faded reputation, it must be admitted that few writers have to apprehend the misfortune of a similar degradation."

In order to give this Scott-Byron story in a connected manner, we jumped over a couple of years ; but now we return to 1821, and its troubles for Beyle, political as well as personal.

The accusation of being an agent of the French police was felt by Beyle to be a "tile fallen on his head." But bricks and tiles of this sort flew about lustily in 1821 ; for Italy was in a state of political earthquake, and the reciprocal civility or tolerance of Austrians and Milanese disguising their dislike was at an end. Beyle being ultra-liberal, and living habitually in circles not friendly to Austrian rule, it is not surprising that he received notice to quit the Austrian States ; and with a heavy heart he left Milan for Paris, after nearly seven years' residence in the friendly capital of Lombardy.

The Austrian rule displeased Beyle in two capacities ; not only as a Frenchman of that date, but as a half-nationalised and liberal Italian. He describes the Government as in general very good, but very much hated, so that even the functionaries had a persuasion that the Austrians would be sooner or later expelled. "*Depuis l'employé de six cent francs jusqu'à, M. de Bubna, General et Strassoldo President, tous trois sincèrement croient que d'ici à vingt ans l'Italie prendra une position naturelle.*" This great change, first seriously attempted in 1848, and then unsuccessful, did take place in 1859, that is to say, eighteen years later than the date predicted by Beyle. "*Le gouvernement a voulu appliquer à l'Italie les lois paternelles faites pour les lourds habitants du Danube ; enfin la législation des ânonns et des oies appliquée à un peuple de singes malins et méchants.*" This is unjust to both Austrians and Italians. The heavy inhabitants of the Danube have much good-nature, and have not the caustic spirit of Frenchmen ; but a deficiency in intelligence or a want of thorough scientific culture is what nobody can say of German Austrians. The explanation of the riddle is in the bad luck that Austria had in accepting, as compensation for her sacrifices during the long French wars, provinces with a nationality which could not be assimilated with the rest of the empire, and this, least of all, in an age of passionate nationalism.

## CHAPTER XXII.

1821-22—Beyle Returns to Paris—The Literary Drawing-rooms of the Restoration—Beyle's Dislike of Madame de Staël's Writings, and Admiration of Benjamin Constant—Count Daru during the Restoration—Beyle visits London—Projects a Literary Journal in Paris—Publication of "De l'Amour."

ON arriving in Paris, Beyle had to renew his society, for that of the Empire had become dispersed, and many of its functionaries, civil and military—perhaps a majority of them—had accommodated themselves to the Restoration, and to a normal state of peace and consequent state of prosperity. It is certain that Louis XVIII. and his favourite Minister, M. de Cazes, wished honestly to inaugurate the system of the two Chambers with temperate liberty, in spite of a democratic opposition and a Bonapartist opposition that allied itself with democracy. Their chief difficulty was with those beside and behind the throne, who were unwisely more royalist than royalty itself. The air which Europe breathed after 1814 and 1815 teemed with a spirit of reaction against liberal opinions, which led inevitably to the revolutionary movements of 1821, from which half of Europe suffered, and by which Beyle was so inconvenienced in quitting his new Milanese home. In France, a people for whom Béranger wrote songs, and Paul Louis Courier wrote pamphlets, while Royer Collard and Benjamin Constant—reviled as "idéologues," and condemned to mutism, under the First Empire—occupied their natural places as opposition orators, could not be considered as other than a relatively free people, controlled by those stronger checks and that more active executive power which the Celtic races cannot dispense with to the same extent as those of Saxon blood.

The assassination of the Duke de Berry had forced the most conciliatory and really liberal M. de Cazes from power. The King unwillingly parted from his Minister, but made him a duke, with proportional pecuniary advantages; so that people said, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will inherit the earth." The Pavillon Marsan (as the wing of the Tuileries is called



which is situated next the Rue de Rivoli, and was then inhabited by the Comte d'Artois) was victorious, and moderate liberalism was in temporary discredit at court, in spite of all the hopes and wishes of the aged and valetudinarian monarch, who, within three years of his death, had neither the moral nor the physical courage longer to resist his brother and kindred.

The free-thinking Beyle, with his foible for Bonapartism, found his natural place in the opposition, which then formed a galaxy of most of the first intellects in France. I say *most*; for Chateaubriand, the youthful Lamartine, Victor Hugo, and minor men such as Alfred de Vigny, were in the royalist ranks.\* It was at the house of the illustrious Destutt de Tracy that Beyle met Lafayette, Benjamin Constant, and other celebrities of the period; and it is evident that his brilliant conversational powers, his special knowledge and fresh impressions of Italian art and literature, added to the amiability and natural gaiety of his nature, made him a delightful drawing-room guest and table companion. If Madame Récamier's house, with Chateaubriand, Matthieu de Montmorency, Ballanche, &c., &c., was the first *bureau d'esprit* of the royalists, the house of Destutt de Tracy occupied a similar place in the liberal camp.

Madame de Staël was now in the tomb, but the settled hostility which Beyle had to the memory of this brilliant woman broke out on various occasions. In spite of his occasional diatribes on Napoleon, as the man who, by means of glory, bribed the French nation out of the dearly purchased right to constitutional liberty, Beyle was a Bonapartist at heart; his intelligence might be with republicanism, but his sympathies had been with the exile of St Helena. Consequently for Chateaubriand and Madame de Staël there was no mercy. The style of the former was in some respects so exaggerated and ridiculous, that it made itself easily exposed to the shafts of the satirists; but Madame de Staël's books, although written with more formality than Beyle's, have the same quality of a rich abundance of ideas and of felicitous illustration. The carelessness, the repetitions, and crudities of Beyle may even be unfavourably contrasted with the admirable arrangement and condensation of Madame de Staël's works; yet the severe and classical De Staël appears pedantic

\* Victor Hugo, addressing the Comte de Chambord in the "Année Terrible," says—

"J'ai sur ton berceau, fragile et triomphant,  
Chanté mon chant d'Aurore."

and affected to the spontaneous and romantic Beyle. Writing to his friend Colomb, he offers the following opinions on this celebrated lady :—

“To thee, who hast lived in the society of Madame de Staël when her character of an exile rendered her interesting, I address some observations. She appears to me to be devoid of the modesty of sensibility, full of *esprit* and imagination, but without any instruction except from the reading of Hume and Montesquieu without understanding them. Launched into the drawing-rooms of Europe with the first men of the age, she has picked up phrases on each of the great problems that have been in discussion for the last thirty years. Her true study was drawing-room success ; for good society is composed of people who devote that time to refined tastes which the others employ in making money. Good society is aristocratic, and for a banker's daughter to live with duchesses, Madame de Staël's parchments was her father's position as Minister. The heroic names of Mesdames Bertrand and Lavalette will be honoured by posterity, while those of Mesdames De Staël and De Genlis will be lost in the crowd of those ordinary souls who only admire virtue when it is employed for the benefit of political power. The spectacle which the society of Coppet presented was curious ; it was a public exhibition of conversation.

“In her book on the Revolution she painted well the men in whose company she had dined—Sieyès, for instance. As for ‘Delphine,’ it is atrociously tiresome. She paints admirably the laws of society in 1780 ; but in order to paint the passions, one must have a soul which is generous and true, and this she had not, as witness her eulogies of aristocracy after the massacre of Nismes, and her calumnies of Bonaparte in St Helena. Her best work is ‘L'Allemagne,’ an analysis furnished by M. (August Wilhelm) Schlegel. It is an agreeable sketch, but must be false, for she did not know German. What should we think of an Englishman of letters who sought to judge our great writers without knowing French ? ”

There are fragments of truth in this judgment, but also very gross injustice. That Madame de Staël posed too much for the admiration of the individuals composing the *bureaux d'esprit* of Paris and Geneva may be most true ; but how does a man of Beyle's intelligence classify a woman of really superior intellect like Madame de Staël with the alternately slipshod and namby-pamby Madame de Genlis ? It may also be true that “L'Alle-

magne" is no more than a very agreeable sketch of the golden age of German letters and Weimar society; but what more do we ask from a woman? Is the female intellect intended by nature to innovate like that of a Fichte, or to be comprehensive like that of a Goethe, a Voltaire, or a Herder?

If such was Beyle's opinion of Madame de Staël, his verdict on the man who was, during some of the most interesting parts of Madame de Staël's life, her right-hand man, was by contrast very favourable. At this period Benjamin Constant was a sort of Burke of the Chamber of Deputies, that is to say, not the most popular orator, but he that was most appreciated by the intellectual few. In vehemence, simplicity, and telling effect he was greatly surpassed by General Foy. The Genevese Constant had not the boundless profusion of imagery of the Irish Burke, but he treated every subject in a philosophic manner, and with a glow of conviction and a spontaneous felicity of language that charmed his hearers. As a public man and political character, his life was one of integrity and consistency; but in private life, particularly in money matters, he had not that morality or scrupulousness which would have completed the great citizen. Like Fox, he was a gambler and in difficulties, but did not always get out of them as a gentleman should have done. In society he was the most agreeable talker of the metropolis, possessing the eminently French qualities of refined distinctions, evolved with perfect clearness, and with the most spontaneous colloquial ease and absence of all effort. Beyle's judgment of him and of his History of the Hundred Days' reign is upon the whole favourable.

"The Hundred Days was the reign of General Carnot, that is to say, the reign of the Republic. Napoleon was only Minister of War. The only act of a sovereign was the 'Acte Additionnel.' This dispelled all illusions, for it showed the ambitious man who wished to stifle in France all love of liberty. The few just principles in the 'Acte Additionnel' were put in, in spite of the Emperor and of his Minister, M. de Bassano, by M. Benjamin Constant. This courageous man, who in 1802 had combated Bonaparte at the tribunat, did not hesitate to second him in 1815: this may be matter of blame, because M. Benjamin Constant is very poor. Bonaparte made him Councillor of State, with twenty-five thousand francs salary. Most of the colleagues of M. Constant at the tribunat, having abandoned the interests of the Republic, had great places and good appointments from 1802

to 1814. M. Constant regarded the domination of Napoleon in 1815 as an accomplished fact. This evil being admitted, he sought to diminish it."

Beyle's former great protector, Count Daru, being a moderate and politic man, had accommodated himself to the Bourbon rule notwithstanding his former close relations with the Emperor and the Empire; but he continued to occupy himself with letters, and to take a distinguished place in the literary society of the capital without distinction of party. He had been put into the House of Peers during the ministry of M. de Cazes in 1819, and in that year published a literary work by which he is most known, "The History of the Republic of Venice," in seven volumes, a pleasing compilation, that has been displaced as yet by no other similar work, although it is not, and cannot be, the definitive history of Venice, the archives of which are only now slowly emerging to light. But it is a work of labour by a man who, besides literary accomplishments, had been a conspicuous administrator and actor in the great events of the previous quarter of a century. Daru's place in literature was fully acknowledged, for he was during many years President of the French Academy, and, like Fontanes, a speaker of tact and dignity, who could say the right thing at the right time. He is also the author of a "History of Brittany," published at Paris in 1826, which I have not seen, and cannot speak of. Three years after that, in 1829, he died of apoplexy at his chateau of Meulan, at the age of sixty-two. He had done all in his power to push Beyle into opportunities of an easy material existence, but the wayward man of letters and man of genius followed his own road, as was, in fact, to be expected in the case of an individuality so independent, eccentric, and distinct from the ordinary run of prosaic and calculating mortals.

Beyle paid a couple of visits to England at this time, and being very capable of writing miscellaneous criticisms on literature and art, he succeeded in making arrangements with Mr Colburn, the eminent London publisher, for a series of notices on works appearing in Paris, an occupation which lasted several years, and somewhat aided his income; and the post of a literary correspondent, running through the amusing or instructive books of the day, was rather an agreeable one.

The splendid success of the *Edinburgh* and *Quarterly Reviews* had more than once fixed Beyle's attention, and, as already stated, he was a regular reader of the former publication. There were no similar organs of opinion on literature in France at that

period ; the modern and successful French *Revue*s were established much later. The *Mercure* had had a European celebrity in its day, when Chateaubriand and other noted men were the contributors to it, but during the Restoration it was chiefly in the feuilletons of the *Journal des Debats* that the intellectual public of France found literary criticism under the direction of the liberal and enlightened M. Bertin de Vaux, subsequently one of Louis Philippe's peers ; and in this organ first appeared the germs of many of those labours of the Guizots, Villemains, and Saint Marc Girardins which were subsequently expanded into works that have taken a permanent place in the classical literature of France.

In February 1822, Beyle planned a literary journal, to be called the *Aristarque*, the prospectus of which shows his scope and intention, and of which the motto was “The naked truth” (“La verité toute nue”).

“The *Aristarque*, or General Indicator of books to be read.

“Eh ! quoi ! another literary journal ? With your leave, this one will differ from all others. Two citizens served the State previous to 1814 in different capacities, the one in France, the other abroad. The project is to escape ennui by giving a rigorously impartial account of the most remarkable books that have appeared in Europe, America, and the Indies. Jacques and Pierre are of opinion that no other qualities are needed but those employed in their former functions, that is to say, intelligence, sincerity, and courage. They are not men of letters, and in reviews and extracts will efface their own individuality in favour of the author who is to be reviewed.

“The two citizens who undertake the *Aristarque* travelled abroad from 1814 to 1822. They know between them the literatures of Germany, England, and Italy. They will be laconic, avoiding all pomp and emphasis in their style, and will take care to have no sentences that are longer than four lines,” &c., &c.

The *Aristarque* never saw the light, but in the year in which it was proposed—1822—that which is, perhaps, the most profound and original of all Beyle's works, “*De l'Amour*,” was published. It is an analysis of the ruling passion of the human heart, chiefly as it exists in Italy, and with instances mostly taken from Italian society. According to Beyle's friend, M. Colomb, the work was superinduced by a disappointment of a tender nature which he met with in Italy ; and there can be little doubt that this was the rebuff, which we already described, from the fair

Matilda of Volterra, no doubt mingled with the recollections of the phenomena attendant on his many years' attachment to "Angela," Mdlle. Viet, and other persons. Never before were the pleasures of hope, the tortures of jealousy, and the chagrin consequent on the failure to inspire a reciprocal sentiment, analysed with more natural acumen and expert science. Like many other works of genius, it was unsuccessful on publication. "It is a consecrated work" said the publisher to Beyle, "for nobody dares to touch it." We will say nothing more of it at the present time, as it is fully noticed in the concluding critical section of this work.

# CHAPTER XXIII.

1823—Publication of "Racine et Shakespeare"—English Actors in Paris—De Jouy, Author of the "Érémite de la Chaussée d'Antin"—Victor Hugo in the Bud—Lamartine—Chateaubriand.

THE reader has had many opportunities of seeing that the drama occupied a large space in the literary life of Beyle ; we consequently find that he was in the thick of the fray that took place between the Classicists and Romanticists : and, perhaps, of the pamphlets of that day "Racine et Shakespeare," by Beyle, was the most remarked, if not by the general public, at least by the literary caste. "Racine et Shakespeare" appeared first in a publication called the *Paris Monthly Review*, in the year 1823. Paul Louis Courier aided Beyle with his advice, on the latter submitting the manuscript to his perusal. Certainly on any question of style no one was more competent to give him an advice than this celebrated writer, who was not only one of the greatest political humourists of this century, but, judging from the severe purity and correctness of his own writings, must have been most capable of criticism of style and arrangement, to say nothing of his masculine practical common sense on almost everything with which he occupied his mind. Beyle was a charming writer from the abundance of his ideas and the perfect naturalness and easy familiarity of his style, but he was not, like Courier, distinguished by the closest condensation and the most austere purity. Beyle often repeats quite unconsciously, with a slight change of metaphor, what he has already, perhaps, twice over told the reader in the previous page. The only reproach one can make to the style of Paul Louis Courier is, that his purity is now and then tinged with locutions, which, although indisputably accurate, seem to ordinary eyes somewhat archaic and pedantic. But he was a manly, nervous writer, and as remote from the spangles and Bengal lights of Chateaubriand as Beyle himself was.

"Racine et Shakespeare" was simply an advocacy of that

great change in the French drama which was called for by public opinion in consequence of the ennui produced, not so much by the familiarly known and much admired tragedies of Racine, as by the productions of those who imitated his antiquated form without the sustaining power of his genius. Beyle reproduced with apropos and considerable ingenuity Dr Johnson's well-known arguments against the so-called "unities;" and in answer, M. Auger, of the Academy, as an advocate of the classics, commented severely on the presumption of the innovator, which drew forth a continuation of "Racine et Shakespeare" in the form of a most felicitous quiz of Academicians as conservators of obsolete traditions.

The revolution in the French drama was greatly aided and impelled by this publication of Beyle, and followed by those extraordinary productions of Victor Hugo, which at once delighted and repelled the lover of the drama by their magnificent invention, their boundless powers of fancy, their metaphysical incongruity, and paradoxical monstrosity.

In the winter of 1822-23, English actors made a trial of Shakespeare's tragedies and Sheridan's comedies in Paris under the direction of a manager named Penley; and some years afterwards there seemed the probability of the establishment of an English theatre in Paris. But the first season was stormy, for more than one reason: there was the wounded self-love of the French nation after the close of the war, and the intense antipathy against the English in the general public.

Then there was the opposition of a large part of the republic of letters to the romanticism which sought to elevate the "*insular barbarian Williams*" to a parity with, or, perhaps, in the case of some audacious romanticist, to a superiority to the classic Racine. But in spite of the clamour, hisses, and opposition which necessitated the employment of the police force to keep order, the English theatre maintained its ground, and Miss Smithson (subsequently Madame Berlioz) became a great favourite of the French public, although she did not succeed in London in becoming a successor to the Siddons and O'Neills. Edmund Kean and all the other great English actors of that period gave performances on the French boards, and the English theatre succumbed ultimately, partly through the French revolution of 1830, but in reality chiefly because France passed over to the romantic school, and because the old English standard pieces being used up, there were no longer English dramatists of suf-



ficient genius to furnish fresh material for the boards. On the contrary, the French stage was most prolific in men of rare dramatic power, even admitting conceptions of taste essentially different from the British standard.

One of the chief opponents of the Shakesperian invasion was the well-known De Jouy, who had written the text-book of Spontini's "*Vestale*," and who had subsequently produced the much less effective one of Rossini's "*William Tell*" in conjunction with M. Hippolyte Bis. But by far the best thing which he had done was the "*Érémite de la Chaussée d'Antin*," a series of familiar sketches of citizen-life in the manner of the *Spectator*, La Bruyère's "*Characters*," &c., &c.,—a book which attained European celebrity, and produced imitations in other countries, so that within a few years several other capitals of Europe had a hermit of this description. I can recollect, in my younger days, of a "hermit in Edinburgh," in addition to a "hermit in London." Castelli's celebrated sketches of Vienna citizen-life are a palpable imitation of Jouy. Beyle's account of him in his literary correspondence is not very flattering to a man anxious to take a high place in the temple of fame.

"M. de Jouy, one of the most noted persons of French literature, was born at the little village of Jouy near Versailles. He was a very handsome man, and through his relations with the wife of the governor of Pondicherry, he rose in the army, and needing the predicate [*particule*] took the name of De Jouy. On a very hot day in India, he with a brother officer entered a temple and admired a vestal virgin; but the natives sawed his brother officer in two, and put the vestal to death, De Jouy himself barely escaping with his life; so he returned to France, but with a fair fortune and a good military reputation. He has written some pretty vaudevilles and two or three tragedies. One of them, '*Tippoo Saib*,' failed in spite of the infinite intrigues of the author; the other, '*Sylla*,' had the greatest success, thanks to Talma, who imitated all the gestures of Napoleon. The French tragic authors are in great fear of Shakespeare, and the English manager has played them an ugly trick by bringing Shakespeare on the French stage. It would be curious if Miss Penley were to cause the masterpieces of Shakespeare to be relished. In such a case, adieu to the reputation of M. de Jouy, Arnould fils, Lavigne, Ancelot, Bis, Guirand, &c., &c. Each of these gentlemen has produced two or three tragedies in the epic style; the verses are ranting and grandiloquent, but the pieces are

mortally dull and tiresome. The personages act like people devoid of common sense, and the rhymes are copied from Racine. M. de Jouy is the fashionable bookmaker of the day ; he is a pleasant man, and, like his books, without depth—a quality that would be a defect in the true bookmaker. A book, to sell well, should have a pretty title, should be written on a fashionable subject, and should be easily comprehended."

The successes of M. Eugène Scribe began soon after the war of 1815 ("Une Nuit de Garde Nationale," in 1817), and they continued until well into the second half of the century. He certainly was the Lopez de Vega of his epoch ; and, as in the case of the Spanish dramatist, he will prove an inexhaustible mine to the future comedy and opera text-book writer. His long comedies have made most noise. Need we mention "Un Verre d'Eau" "La Calomnie," "La Camaraderie," "Une Chaîne," and "Oscar." But what one finds really most enjoyable in Scribe are the vaudevilles produced between 1820 and 1830—felicitous, but not elaborate in construction, and full of that which is deficient in his more lengthy, more ingeniously constructed, and more ambitious works, viz., natural comic characters and comic situations, easily brought about, with occasional pathos of a simple and pleasing description. Such were "Une Visite à Bedlam," "Le Secrétaire et le Cuisinier," "L'Ours et le Pacha," "Michel et Christine," "Michel Perrin," and a host of others. As for his opera-books, he created a new species of spectacle, in which he showed himself superior to all his rivals. Nevertheless, he appears to have rendered the sphere of opera perhaps too extended for the recreation of an evening, and so as to become rather too much of a task for the auditor. Something was wanted beyond the old Italian opera, with its too long and too undivided first act ; but the five-act opera-book seems to overshoot the mark, even when the music is of a high class.

Scribe began his second manner by the *comédie larmoyante*, or domestic drama, of "Valérie," which is thus characterised by Beyle—

"This sentimental comedy will have eighty representations, and why ? Because it is a departure from the style of the age of Louis XIV. It ran the greatest risk of being hissed the first evening ; but the public not daring to hiss the delicious Mdlle. Mars, who plays the part of a blind young girl of eighteen, surmounted its prudery, and gave way to the pleasure of something new. 'Valérie' is a romance of Madame Krudner's trans-

ferred to the stage. M. Scribe is a man of thirty, who has given ninety-five vaudevilles and comedies; eighty have fallen into oblivion; fifteen or twenty are charming pieces. 'Valérie,' which is a sketch without depth, is as pretty on perusal as it is when seen on the boards, for fortunately it is in prose."

As for Victor Hugo, who was then at his début, it will be seen that Beyle no more divined the future Victor Hugo in 1823 than Jeffrey did the Byron of the future from the "Hours of Idleness." "This M. Hugo has a talent in the manner of Young, the author of the 'Night Thoughts.' He is always exaggerated without real glow. His party, the royalists, have procured him great success; but it cannot be denied that he knows very well how to make French verses. Unfortunately he is somniferous." This will rather surprise the reader, who does not remember that it is Hugo merely in the first budding of genius. With regard to his subsequent career, great perversions of taste, elevations of the exception instead of the rule, and the planting of virtues in classes where they do not usually exist, and in individuals where they could not possibly exist, may be made a matter of reproach to Hugo; but what a rich and exuberant imagination, and what a longevity of creative power in this remarkable man, who unfortunately stands no higher than M. de Lamartine in the sphere of practical politics! What unrealisable philanthropic dreams in the midst of anarchy, state agony, and personal antagonism!

At that same period, when Louis XVIII. was quitting an uneasy throne for the other world, M. de Lamartine was one of the *jeunesse dorée* of the Restoration, although destined in later years to be almost the apologist of Robespierre, and to have helped to precipitate the House of Orleans from the throne by the fascinating brilliancy of his pictures of the first revolution. Already he had begun to give utterance to a poetic genius in his earlier, and, as most people think, his most charming productions. The young *garde du corps* and diplomatic aspirant sang, while France listened enraptured to those strange unaccustomed and melancholy notes. His appearance in the sphere of literature and poesy after Byron was like the placid lake with the soft purple tints of twilight after the roar of troubled waters, the loud whistle of the mountain winds, and the thick mist fended by the lightning's flash. Lamartine's soul was full of hope and love, and those dulcet tones of his pleasing melancholy song, of so universal acceptance, went forth to nations that could

neither sympathise with the political leanings of a Béranger, nor even comprehend in that exquisite poet a force of humorous allusion, so French, so local, and with every allowance for the compact beauty of the song-writer, so tinctured with polemic passion, and often with positive injustice. Would that a deceptive self-esteem had never drawn Lamartine into that political career in which he shipwrecked his fortune and his happiness—in which he lived a parliamentary orator with a delusive rhetoric that never convinced, and a would-be administrator of the state who could not bring the pettiest matters of either public or private business to a practical conclusion.

Beyle says of this great poet, "In spite of the reproaches which M. de Lamartine may incur [this alludes to his enthusiastic royalism], he is nevertheless the second, or the first poet of France, according as we put M. de Béranger, the song-writer, before or after him. M. de Lamartine reproduces with a divine grace the sentiments which he himself has experienced. That vague feeling of sadness shared in by the young men of fortune of our day is simply the result of superabundant leisure. Napoleon shook up the youth of his time, to whom a sombre ennui was unknown. Nevertheless at that time one of its most beautiful pictures has been produced—I mean the little romance of M. Chateaubriand entitled '*Réné*.'"

This is one of the rare occasions on which Beyle has a good word to say about Chateaubriand. Beyle, the free-thinker of the eighteenth century school, and the fluent unaffected writer, the man who by pseudonyms hid his light under bushels, was the antipodes of the pompous and grandiloquent Chateaubriand, a haughty man, who condescended to patronise Christianity, a religion of humility propagated by fishers and carpenters. It is strange, however, that this admirer of Christianity more than once rendered ministerial combinations abortive, because, unfortunately, as he said of himself, "*he was only efficient in first positions!*" But we agree with Beyle, that, in spite of the personal vanity and weakness of the author, "*Réné*" will live. Nevertheless, few men who have made so much noise in their lifetime have passed to posterity with a greater decline in the value of their baggage.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

1823-24—Beyle goes to Rome—Mathieu de Montmorency—Beyle Publishes his “Life of Rossini”—Rossini’s Personal Impressions of Beyle—Beyle seeks Employment as a Fine-Art Critic.

BEYLE passed the winter of 1823-24 in Italy, partly in the North and partly in Rome, and again made very short visits in the autumns of 1825 and 1826 to collect the materials for another work on that beautiful land, published some years later, with the title, “Promenades dans Rome.”

He usually dined at the restaurant called the Armellino, the haunt of artists. One of those who dined with him was Mercadante, as he says, “a little young man, with an intelligent face.” Beyle adds, “He has a style of his own, and that is much; all Rome sings airs of ‘Elisa e Claudio.’”

Of his compatriots at Rome Beyle writes, “I could not have been better received by the ambassador of France. The most curious thing that I have seen is the young Frenchman travelling in Italy. They come to die of pleasure, and they die of ennui. They do not speak four words of Italian, and pretend to be capable of judging the Italians. It makes one die of laughing; to which add the obligatory enthusiasm for Rome. Altogether it is very droll.”

The ambassador alluded to was Viscount Mathieu de Montmorency, whom Charles X. subsequently made a duke, and who declined to change his name, although his brother was Duke de Montmorency-Laval. The brothers had returned from the emigration to Paris under the Directory in 1799, being among the first of the old noblesse to attempt to reconstitute the old society after the wreck. They were great admirers and very intimate friends of Madame Récamier.

Beyle says of the ambassador, “M. de Montmorency does the honours with perfect grace, for it never embarrasses. It is always a bore to see the master of the house approach you when two hundred guests are present; but in this case the Duke makes himself to be no more than an additional amiable person joining

the group. There are three or four Roman ladies of the greatest beauty—Madame Dodwell, Princess Bonacorsi, &c., &c. These ladies have quite the assured, decisive, and trenchant tone which used to be the fashion at the court of France. Imagine the crowd of pretty women, with fourteen cardinals, surrounded by a cloud of prelates and abbés. The French abbés are rather embarrassed by these charms, so as to make one laugh ; but the Roman abbés look at them with intrepidity.”

But Beyle confessed that Rome did not seduce him ; for he found himself isolated, and he considered that it was not worth while during a whole month to pay court to the tiresome people of the fashionable houses in order to be fourth aide-de-camp of one of those pretty ladies. He sighed for intimacy, and regretted Paris and Milan.

The fact is, that Beyle was now occupied with a new passion. In his heart the Angelas and Matildas of Italy had given place to a lady who resided in Paris ; so Beyle’s sojourn in Rome was on this occasion a very short one, and he returned home early in the spring of 1824. This latter amour is to us almost as obscure as the former ones. One or two short letters to the object of his admiration confirm the impression derived from his celebrated work, that a man could not have written so profoundly on the dominant passion without having felt its acutest torments and delights. His self-anatomy, therefore, is always interesting. The following is taken from his collected correspondence, but the name and position of the new innamorata remain in the dark. He writes—

“ When I have seen you three successive days, my angel, it seems to me that I love you more and more, if that be possible. I love you so warmly to-day, that I must put it in writing *per sfogarmi*, that is to say, to deliver and relieve myself.

“ My good qualities are joined to bad ones, that are more disagreeable to myself than to others. When a conscript enters a dragoon regiment, he receives a horse ; and if he has sense, he will soon learn the temper of the horse. But to know that a horse shies does not free the horse from the defect. So with myself and my temper, as I have remarked these two years. My defects were not prominent in Italy, where everybody is original, and does what he chooses, without caring about his neighbour. But in France, people always are asking what do our neighbours say ? Therefore do not have the smallest anxiety about me. I love you passionately. Is it possible that my

accursed originality should have given you an erroneous idea of my tenderness ?

“Excuse my anger the other day, at your having called me ‘a litterateur.’ I accepted the dinner, imagining it would be like those of four years ago ; but the leaden faces that surrounded you spoiled all. If I had said anything delicate to you, the leaden faces would have fallen foul of me. There is the misfortune of your position. Tiresome people cause you to lose your mornings, and human life is composed of the mornings !”

The following is French to the last syllable :—

“Adieu ! Everything is insupportable to me since I know that you are no longer here. Yesterday I had a delicious dinner, where there were nine men of wit and myself. Unluckily I was not in the least brilliant. I spoke very little, and the little I did say was heavy. This catastrophe will agitate my great soul. Perhaps I will have to renounce love. How can I reconcile myself to not shining ?”

In the intervals of love-making, speculative politics occasionally occupied Beyle. His philosophy was quite Horatian. He had considerable political intelligence, and was capable of taking a large view of modern history, and even of the political situation of the day, when his extreme adoration of Napoleon was for the moment forgotten ; but he did not like politics or political discussions to interrupt the harmony of life, or derange his enjoyment of art, literature, and society. Upon the whole, he thought politics to be rather an unpleasant intruder than an interesting visitor. This is curiously shown in a letter which he wrote to that well-known English table-talker, Mr Sutton Sharpe, whose acquaintance he had made on a previous visit to London, and with whom he now occasionally kept up a correspondence, mostly on political subjects. He writes, on the 15th June 1824, a letter which closes with a characteristic little “Beylism.”

“When we look aside from the serious results of the Revolution, we are unpleasantly impressed with the present state of society in France. The *grand seigneurs* with whom one passed one’s youth are now malignant old ultras. I thought this must be the effect of age ; but their children, who will inherit large fortunes and fine titles, are no better. All the philosophers of the eighteenth century would fain prove to me that a *grand seigneur* is an immoral and hurtful being. To this I answer, that I like a well-bred and *gay grand seigneur*, such as those whom I saw in my family when I began to read. Society, deprived of

those gay, charming, amiable beings, seems to me to be the year deprived of its spring, But *wisdom* says to me that they are immoral beings, productive of unhappiness, &c., &c.; but I answer, 'Fair wisdom! I am neither a king nor a legislator. I am an obscure little citizen in search of daily enjoyment, fond of society, and afflicted at the state of irritation in which it finds itself. Is it not a sad thing for me, who have only a day to pass in a drawing-room, to find it just taken possession of by the masons with their plaster and whitewash, by the painters, who drive me away with the smell of varnish, and the carpenters with their hammers fixing the parquet to the joists of the floor? All these people protest to me that if they discontinue their labours, the drawing-room will tumble down. Alas! why had I not the good fortune to dwell in this drawing-room before you got into it?"

Notwithstanding the quiet humour of this conclusion of the letter, it may be doubted if Beyle's complaint was justified. Had he passed his youth and middle age previous to the great Revolution, in the enjoyment of the society of those gay [and amiable beings of whom he writes, and had his old age been clouded by the long and sombre phases of the Revolution, the complaint would have been well founded; but as the Revolution and its long and hideous train of war passed by when Beyle was little more than thirty years old (in 1815 Beyle was thirty-two), and as the age which followed the peace was one eminently brilliant in literature and art, and as the *bureaux d'esprit* of the Récamiers and the Destutt de Tracy's were as active in their functions as those of a Holbach or a Du Deffand, this letter is a proof of how difficult it is for the most intelligent mortals to appreciate the advantages they enjoy at their true value.

Beyle's politics were liberal, almost radical; but he had a great foible for aristocracy, with the reserve of laughing at it when in the sardonic vein. A year after the date of the above letter, we find another on the same subject to the same person, which might be called a little essay on the physiology of aristocratic existence.

"Excuse, my dear friend, the little philosophic discussion which follows. I must get it out somehow, although you may be the victim immolated by this intemperance of my pen.

"The people who possess millions, and whose ancestors went to the crusades, are the natural judges of *bon ton*. Their sphere of rule was extended by Louis XIV., and was immense at the close of the reign of Louis XV., but now it is much diminished



by the force of representative government. Nevertheless, whatever respect I may have for the empire of the spinning-jenny and the steam-engine, *bon ton* will be the attribute of the class in which every individual from the age of eighteen can live for his own amusement.

"You may say that this class abuses its power; and what class does not do so? The prince as well as the philosopher, the Duke of Modena as well as D'Alembert. If Frederick II. had not been afraid of public opinion, he would have cut off heads as the Grand Turk. The people of *bon ton*, abusing their power, have agreed to declare in bad taste not only whatever is emphatic, affected, base, and revolting, but also all truths that are disagreeable to their vanity. The fools who form the majority of the people who are millionaires and descendants of crusaders, have said among themselves, 'We have invented the proper manner of mounting on horseback, of buttoning one's coat; and we declare everything contrary to these customs to be in bad taste.' Those who have the misfortune to mount on horseback or to button their coat otherwise than as we do, are declared to be persons of bad taste; and we have compassion on them for not being born in Paris. If, however, they come to Paris to pay us homage, if they have the talent for art, if they amuse us, we will end in pardoning them. David Hume, Horace Walpole, and the King of Sweden, were thus treated by us; but woe to the writer who should preach any other manners than the manners of Paris; nothing could save him from contempt. If his book was to succeed, we should not be the sole models of good manners and good taste. The enriched citizen would no longer imitate us with veneration; his millionaire son would no longer ask on his knees to be allowed to marry our little hunchbacked daughter."

The juxtaposition in the above of honest, *douce* David Hume with a perfect man of the world like Horace Walpole, who possessed the spirit of society as completely as anybody, whether French or foreign, whom he met in Paris, does not appear to be very felicitous in a letter addressed to an Englishman who was essentially a man of minute shades and refined distinctions.

It was in 1824 that Beyle published his most popular work, the "Life of Rossini." The preface bears the date of Montmorency, in September 1823; but the greater part of it was written in a room of the Hôtel Lillois, No. 83 Rue de Richelieu, where Madame Pasta occupied the first floor, and nightly held a conver-

sazione from eleven to two, frequented by musical Italians and literary Frenchmen.

The "Life of Rossini" is one of the most charming of Beyle's books. It is not the work of a technical musician, but of a man of musical soul and rare literary genius, admiring and gently criticising a new light that blazed meteor-like across the firmament of European art, dazzling for a time all beholders; and even when the first burst of enthusiasm was past, compelling the coldest to say, "That was a luminary of the rarest splendour."

But the work of Beyle is incomplete, for it breaks off with a most fugitive, unjust, and thoughtless appreciation of "Semiramide," which is certainly one of the greatest works of the composer. And although Beyle lived to 1842, there was no continuation so as to include the "Siege of Corinth" (the second form of "Maometta II.") and the French version of "Mosé," both of which had important additions, so as to elevate them to be works of a high class. When we add that there was no notice of the delicious "Comte Ory," with refinements of writing for both voice and orchestra which render it pleasing to the most fastidious musicians, and, lastly, nothing of "Tell" and the "Stabat Mater," the book of Beyle must be considered as merely a contribution to some knowledge of the earlier part of the career of Rossini. But it is a most interesting contribution, and the book is eminently *Rossinian*, full of charm and gaiety, and without a dull or pedantic passage from first to last. Errors in data are not infrequent; but the reader who yawns over the more correct Frères Escudier, or smiles at the Parson Adams' sort of simplicity of Joseph Carpani, reads the mercurial Beyle with vivid enjoyment. Bussière says, not without truth, "Stendahl was made to write a biography like that of Rossini, an original and fertile genius, intelligent, fantastic, careless, prodigal of all that nature had given him, and full of unforeseen movements."

The "Vie de Rossini" was published at a most convenient time for popularity and sale; for the Italian Opera of Paris having had for its lessee the composer Ferdinand Paer, the immediate predecessor of Rossini as the popular composer for the theatres of Italy, he was very fond of giving his own operas to the Paris public, and those of Rossini were slowly and unwillingly admitted to the repertory of the theatre; but all the arts of M. Paer, and of his French allies, M. Berton and others, were impotent to resist the Rossinian current, which set in stronger than ever after the arrival of Rossini himself in Paris at this period. Beyle's

book was therefore conveniently ready to satisfy the public curiosity at a period when the rage for "Tancredi," "L'Italiana," "Il Barbiere," and "Otello," was at its height with the Parisian public.

Beyle met Rossini in private on several occasions, as well at Elena Vigano's in Milan, as at Madame Pasta's lodgings in Paris ; but notwithstanding his admiration of the author of "Tancredi" and "L'Italiana," the latter does not seem to have cared about cultivating Beyle's acquaintance. Beyle did not generally make a favourable first impression ; it was after being known that he came to please by the charm of his conversation. Rossini was the spoiled child of fortune, and his great affair was to escape being hunted down by the admirers of a genius that none disputed. Beyle's early literary successes were only successes of esteem. Beyle had a European reputation, but he had not European popularity, for his force lay in those refined distinctions which he introduced into discussions of questions of art, literature, and national character which will always be "caviare to the general." But letting alone the early career of Beyle, some persons have expressed surprise that Rossini was not flattered by the publication of Beyle's "Vie de Rossini ;" but it must be remembered that this most agreeable production of literature does not contain enough of *musical* knowledge to have taken hold of the respect of so great a musician as Rossini. "Semiramide" was the greatest of all Rossini's creations previous to "William Tell," every number of it showing true artistic care as well as inspiration ; and yet such was the work which Beyle slighted at the close of his biography of this eminent composer !

Rossini was satiated with praise ; he had had to stand a dozen years of the idolatry and grandiloquence of his compatriot critics before his arrival in Paris. An Englishman can conceive nothing more absurd and ridiculous than the musical criticism of the towns of Italy. Paer was "the new Apollo ;" perhaps a Portogallo or a Pucita was the "new Orpheus." As for Rossini, he completely exhausted the vocabulary of eulogy. Even now a musical critic of Vienna, Leipsic, or Berlin will give no higher eulogy to a work of Handel, Bach, Gluck, Haydn, Mozart, or Beethoven, than an Italian provincial critic will bestow on an opera of some third-rate composer, which is never destined to cross the Alps.

Some persons have said that Rossini even spoke slightly of Beyle, but such statements must be received with caution. Rossini, although spoiled by the public, was a really good-natured man ; and malignity is always ready to exaggerate expressions to

which the speaker attaches no importance. It is certain that, in mature age, Rossini, who was a man of great natural intelligence, although of tardy general culture, expressed the greatest admiration of the literary powers of Beyle; but it was too late to cultivate personal acquaintance, for the cold clod of Père la Chaise covered the remains of this rare and gifted genius.

One would have thought that, after the publication of the works already mentioned, the pen of Beyle might have been in great request with both booksellers and editors of periodical journals, but this does not appear to have been the case. There is every reason to believe that the gains of this brilliant, natural, and most original author were very small, and that, notwithstanding his being unmarried, and his not having expensive habits, he was far from being at his ease in money matters. In July 1824, we find him writing to a friend—

“C—— is of opinion that, as people no longer read anything except newspapers, an honest man may become a newspaper writer. Therefore that would suit me, and I could undertake the criticisms of the Italian Opera, and of the pictures and prints appearing during the year, and also on the best new books in Italy and England. That would keep our Parisian cockneys [*nos badauds Parisiens*] well acquainted with the two literatures.

“If there is nobody to notice the exhibition of pictures at the Louvre, I could undertake that with a little mendacity, so as to suit the national self-glorification.

“What is the amount of absurdity and falsehood exacted by the principal editor? That is the question. As one always ends by being known, I should not join a journal in which I should become ridiculous by having lied too boldly. If my honour was safe, I should allow the editor to mutilate my articles, as he is the judge of points of convenience, and of the manner in which self-love should be managed. If there was a vacant post of theatrical critic, I could take it with pleasure; but how far will I be allowed to preach the doctrines of the pamphlet, ‘*Racine et Shakespeare*?’ I wish to be known under the name of ‘Roger.’”

This letter, if taken literally, would be an indication either of the infancy of the periodical press in France, or of Beyle’s complete ignorance of how a journal should be conducted. Every journal is a mercantile speculation to serve some section of the public, and no mercantile speculation in the world was ever advanced by mendacity and absurdity. These expressions may therefore be set down as mere *jeux d’esprit* of Beyle at the expense

of that national self-glorification which is the foible of the amiable Gaul.

Beyle succeeded in effecting an engagement with the *Journal de Paris*, and criticised the Paris exhibition of pictures in the autumn of 1824 for this newspaper, which lucubrations enable us to know what Beyle thought at this time of the most eminent artists of France, and some of those of England ; for Eugène Delacroix, Horace Vernet, Leopold Robert, Lawrence, Constable, and many others of similar eminence, were then in full activity.

## CHAPTER XXV.

1824—Classicists and Romanticists—Beyle's Opinions of Louis David—Of Eugène Delacroix—Of Sir Thomas Lawrence—Of Constable—Of Leopold Robert—Of Chantrey—Of Horace Vernet—Beyle Critic of the Italian Opera at Paris.

THE year 1824 may be considered as a period when the battle between the so-called classic and romantic painters was at its height, and when the manner of David experienced a temporary decline of popularity. I say temporary, for now people, without ignoring the mannerism of David, render full justice to the eminent qualities of this painter, who in his lifetime had experienced the extremes of popularity and adverse criticism, and in his personal career had been a contemporary of all the Revolution ; had basked in the warmest sunshine of imperial favour, and who spent his last years in a foreign land in expiation of his almost forgotten membership of the Convention. There now came the romanticism which sought to discredit him even in his own art. Greeks and Romans on canvas had now begun rather to tire the Paris public. The statuesque deficiency of *disinvoltura* in the pictures of David, as well as the exaggerated expression in the productions of Guérin and others of the David school, were all severely criticised, often with too little accompaniment of admission of the qualities which really challenged admiration.

David was a conscientious painter of good intentions, and was a reformer in his day. He purified the French school from the false airs and graces of the eighteenth century ; but his works, although worthy of high eulogy from their learned drawing, their dramatic treatment of the subjects represented, and much that was new to the French school in the way of accurate observation of antique life, manners, and costume, yet never attained that quality which could not be denied to his predecessors, viz., *charm*. Besides a deficiency of *chiaroscuro*, his colour, compared with the Watteaux and the Bouchers, was not agreeable ; it was what Haydon called *brickdusty*. But the greatest of its defects was that his pictures produced the effect not of life, but of a

statuesque and purely conventional representation of life. It was Racine beside Shakespeare. Like all schools of art which are fashionable as much from novelty as from merit, that of David had its vogue; and now the new and independent talents (such as that of Gericault in the "Raft of the Medusa") carried the public taste in a different direction. The romantic school in literature aided the change in the public mind, and the universal popularity of the novels of Scott carried away all Europe from Greeks and Romans to scenes and incidents of middle age and more modern history.

The two parties are thus described by Beyle in those criticisms contributed to the *Journal de Paris*, to which allusion was made at the close of the last chapter—

"The war has begun. The *Journal des Débats* is to be classical, and to swear only by David, and cry aloud, 'Every figure ought to be the copy of a statue,' and the spectator must admire it if he falls asleep on his legs. The *Constitutionnel* defends the new ideas, and has the audacity to maintain that it is allowed to make a step in art even after David; and that a number of muscles accurately painted are not the all-in-all of art. The great pictures, composed of thirty naked figures copied after antique statues, and heavy tragedies in five acts in verse, are no doubt respectable, but begin to produce ennui. If the picture of the 'Sabines' was to be first exhibited at the present time, people would discover that its personages are without passion, and that it is absurd to march to combat without clothing. The Greeks may be fond of the nude, but we never see it; on the contrary, it is repugnant to the moderns."

"The school of David," says Beyle, "can paint the bodies, but cannot paint the souls." But he admits that "this great painter, so remarkable by the force of character, which gave him the courage to despise the Lagrennée and the Vanloo, was an inventor, and as such his glory will not perish, but the artists who imitate his manner will be treated by posterity as the Vasaris and Santi di Titos in comparison with Michael Angelo."

Beyle treats with a certain naivete the contrast between the age of great gallery pictures in France and the period of the Restoration, when so many of the historical noblesse contented themselves with a flat or floor for their dwelling.

"I went eight days ago to the Rue Godot de Mauroy to seek an apartment. I was struck with the smallness of the rooms. I happened to have in my pocket-book a note of the lengths and

breadths of the most celebrated pictures in Europe. Comparing the dimensions of these pictures with that of the little rooms which the master of the house showed me, I said to myself, with a sigh, 'The age of painting is past; only engraving can prosper. Our new manners, by putting down chateaux, render the taste for pictures impossible.' The master of the house looked at me with an air of astonishment. This reminded me that I had unconsciously been talking aloud. I saw that he set me down as somewhat deranged in my intellects, so I quitted the apartment."

That gallery pictures do not suit the exiguities of modern apartments cannot be denied. A usual Paris floor or a cottage orné are best for cabinet pictures, and a Meissonier or a Gerôme would almost seem to have been guided by Beyle in their choice of size; but in the case of men of great dramatic genius, as well as perfect technical painters, we may ask if scenes of so moving and elevated a character should be rendered on the reduced scale of a Mieris or a Metzú? I have my doubts.

The year 1824 was the year of one of the celebrated pictures of the French school, the "Massacre of Scio," by Eugène Delacroix—a picture of colour and movement. But Beyle finds, and with a certain amount of truth, that it seems a picture originally intended to represent a plague, and of which the author, on the strength of newspaper reports, has made a "Massacre of Scio." "But M. Delacroix has a feeling for colour, which is much in this age of drawing. He makes on me the impression of a pupil of Tintoretto. His figures have movement."

In this Beyle shows a felicitous memory. Tintoretto is just the painter that occurs to one on seeing the pictures of Eugène Delacroix. Schnetz, with his admirable and truthful modern Roman peasants and brigands, is warmly eulogised by Beyle; and the following on Lawrence and Constable may interest the English reader—

"The manner of Lawrence is the caricature of the negligence of genius. I confess that I cannot conceive the reputation of this painter. He has this advantage, that he seeks to render the appearances of nature by means quite opposed to those of the French painters. His figures have not the air of being made in wood, but in truth they have little merit. The mouths of his portraits of women have the air of a little piece of red ribbon stuck against the canvas."

The negligence and the haste of Lawrence are too just accusations. In the first part of his career, he had painted for his



fame, and in the last for his kitchen, if we may be allowed to repeat a phrase of Vandyck's own. But Beyle, with his simile of the red ribbon, forgets that carnations are much more ruddy in our damp island than in France. Of Constable, Beyle says—

“If the first portrait painter of London is somewhat mediocre, and quite in the Carl Vanloo style, on the other hand, the English have sent us this year magnificent landscapes by Constable. I doubt if we can match them. Truth captivates from the first in these charming works. The negligence of the brush of Constable is in excess, and he has no ideal, but his delicious landscape is the mirror of nature.”

The Swiss, Leopold Robert, was certainly one of the very few in a century who compelled something more than the passing attention bestowed on the crowd of merely good painters, and of whom one may say, “Here is a rare and exquisite genius.” Although he painted modern Italians and not ancient Romans, yet the David school had its influence on him; but this influence was beneficent. In addition to purity, accuracy of drawing, and consummate linear harmony, Robert had a power of pathetic expression that recalls the great masters of the early Italian schools. Nor can the genius of colour be denied to him. Unfortunately for his fame, he was not lucky in the choice of his vehicle, and many of his pictures are almost a wreck from cracks and sunken colour. This painter of genius, whom “Melancholy marked for her own,” and who, a few years later, committed suicide in Venice, is thus noticed by Beyle—

“There is daily a crowd before Leopold Robert's ‘Improvisatore at the Isle of Ischia.’ All the personages of this pretty picture give themselves airs of grace different from the real and true uncouthness of Neapolitans. It is precisely because the Neapolitan is not an actor, and does not pose, that he is invaluable to the artist. But I admire the ‘Death of the Brigand.’ Here is nature, and the impassioned nature that does not attempt artificial graces. This picture has besides all the merit of good technical painting.”

\* Beyle's admiration of Chantry's celebrated bust of Scott is warm—

“This artist kept sheep some years ago. From this point he became the sculptor in fashion, and I doubt not that he will become as rich as Walter Scott. Chantry has all the address requisite for success in London, and for never shocking the cant which is in fashion there. I cannot tell how much Chantry's bust of

Walter Scott has pleased me. The bust of Lord Byron by Thorwaldsen appears the essay of a scholar compared to the work of Chantry."

In this every one must agree. If Beyle, who probably never set eyes on Scott, felt strongly the vitality and individuality of this most admirable bust, it is an additional honour to the memory of Chantry, that it has been publicly stated that the family and friends of Scott, when in the tomb, found in this work of art the means of recalling his lineaments in his pleasantest and most familiar moments.

The criticisms on Horace Vernet and Ingres are too long for transcription. Of the former he says, "There is bravura in the genius of Horace Vernet in this age of timidity and neatness. He dares and he dares with success." The portraits of Ingres appear to Beyle to be much superior to those of Lawrence, and, as a historical painter, he finds him *grandiose*, an epithet which the subsequent works of this, the greatest French artist of the nineteenth century, fully justify, by invention, comprehensiveness, and an afflatus of high poetry not to be matched in this century, unless we cross the Rhine to the great works of Kaulbach. Ingres has as much as any artist of his generation an indisposition to sacrifice classical severity to popularity and to striking effect.

But Beyle's theories of art, although read with eagerness, were not allowed to pass without pungent criticism. Perhaps, more in pleasantry than in earnest, he attempted to make out that by a course of mechanical instruction, and by attention to certain dogmatic rules, any person of industry could be made a painter of the cold, correct David pattern, just as he could become a geometrician or an adept in trigonometry. Such an absurd theory could not of course escape ridicule. At that time the facetious Martinville, the editor of the *Drapeau Blanc*, a leading organ of the royalist party, lived in that same Hôtel Lillois of 63 Rue de Richelieu. He was an admirer of David, and being amused with Beyle's infallible recipe for becoming a great painter, wrote the following in his journal:—"What are we to think of this good Michael Angelo who was in ecstasies before the Torso of the Belvedere, and who in his old age, when his eyes no longer permitted him to contemplate it, caused himself to be conducted to this fragment which was the object of his predilection, and had a pleasure in passing his trembling hands over this assemblage of muscles produced by the *arithmetic of the Greeks*?"

It must be admitted that on this occasion Beyle was unlucky, and reminds one of the "engineer hoist by his own petard."

In the autumn of 1824 Beyle began a course of criticism on the Italian Opera of Paris, and it is presumable that his "Life of Rossini" must have facilitated the engagement. With the exception of the now obsolete operas of "Romeo e Giulietta," of "Zingarelli," and the "Nina" of Paisiello, the repertory is exclusively Rossinian. Beyle's notices are well done, but do not seem to me to call for further notice or extract. The prima donna was Madame Pasta, then at the climax of her voice and her dramatic power.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

1825-26—Beyle Writes a Pamphlet against the Material Tendencies of the Age—Is Lampooned in Satirical Verses—His Relations with Paul Louis Courier—Revisits England—Publishes his Novel of “Armance”—It is badly received by the Press.

BEYLE's next appearance in print was in the following year, 1825, by the publication of a pamphlet directed against the purely material tendencies of the age, and a vindication of the superiority of intellectual pursuits over the mere hunt after lucre. It had the odd name, “D'un nouveau complot contre les industriels,” and was called forth by theories propounded in the journal of the celebrated M. de St Simon, *Le Producteur*, then edited by Armand Carrel, who was destined to be in later years the collaborateur of M. Thiers in founding the *National*, and to die by the hand of Emile Girardin in a duel which made much noise in the journalistic sphere. The following was the programme of M. de St Simon or of his editor :—

“The object of this journal is to announce a new philosophy and develop its principles. This philosophy, based on a new conception of human nature, acknowledges that the destiny of man is to cultivate and modify external nature to his greatest advantage ; his means of arriving at this object correspond with the three orders of physical, moral, and intellectual faculties which constitute the man,” &c., &c. After this pompous exordium follow a number of truisms, reminding the reader that there is nothing new under the sun, and the programme concludes with the doctrine that “in everything relating to the institutions, the works, and the actions of men only those connected with science, art, and industry have subserved the development of civilisation.”

The moral philosophers, legislators, and men of letters are at once set down from the high place hitherto assigned them, and, according to M. St Simon, “industrial capacity” is that which ought to be in the first line, and ought to judge of all the other

capacities and set them all at work for his own exclusive advantage.

Beyle commences his pamphlet with a pleasant parable in the form of a little dialogue between a manufacturer and his country neighbour:—

“*Manufacturer*.—My dear friend, I have made a capital dinner.

“*Neighbour*.—So much the better for you, my dear friend.

“*Manufacturer*.—Not only so much the better for me, but I maintain that public opinion should ordain me a handsome recompense for having given myself the pleasure of making a good dinner.

“*Neighbour*.—*Diable !* that is going rather too far.”

Beyle then asks “if any one can deny that he is himself an *industriel*, seeing that this sheet of paper, which cost two sous, will be sold a hundred times dearer?” Beyle admits that manufacturers augment the resources of France, but they have done so from motives of personal interest. “They will make good mayors and deputies, for they are men of probity and good financial calculators. But why consider them admirable, or more admirable than the medical practitioner or the advocate?” According to Beyle, the thinking class creates public opinion; and this thinking class was mostly composed of small *rentiers*, journalists, and members of the learned professions, who had incomes of a few thousand francs a year (A.D. 1825), and neither by rich people who have equipages and opera-boxes, nor by poor people whose hard work gives them no time to think. This thinking class accords its approbation to those who do something useful to the greatest number, that is to say, to such men as William Tell or Riego, the popular Spanish patriot of that day.

“While Bolivar was liberating America, and while Captain Parry was approaching the pole, my neighbour has gained ten millions in manufacturing calico. So much the better for him and his children. But since he has set up a journal which informs me every Saturday that I must admire him as a benefactor of humanity, I cannot help shrugging my shoulders at such a pretension.”

Public credit was so little developed and established in the first quarter of the century, that many propositions of Beyle appear crude and others strange, showing a complete change in political manners. Beyle was a reader of the *Edinburgh Review*, as well as of the British political economists, but this heroic or philo-

sophic contempt of wealth as a great engine of both public enterprise and private beneficence, has a schoolboy-essay sort of effect upon the reader. Beyle declares that "a Baron Rothschild would have been a complete impossibility under Bonaparte, for he would probably have sent the Baron to St Pelagie as a recalcitrant lender, as he did with certain cloth manufacturers of Lodève." Others, such as Mohammed Ali, a Milosh, or a Dr Francia, were not more scrupulous. Nowadays the most dishonest rulers and peoples on the face of the earth are constantly anxious to be well spoken of on the chief stock exchanges of Europe.

We agree with Beyle in the following :—

"All professions practised with probity are useful, and consequently estimable ; such is the truth proclaimed by the thinking class, who stand between the *aristocracy*, who wish to get all the good places in the state for themselves, and this *industrialism*, which wishes to appropriate all our esteem. But Catinat, the poor man, was superior to Samuel Bernard, and the great *industriels* [he meant, no doubt, both manufacturers and financiers] of the age of Louis XV. are ridiculous compared with Turgot, who was a poor man and a great one."

According to Beyle, humanity admires and applauds the individuals who sacrifice themselves to the general good ; but what sacrifices have the millionaires made ? He does not despise them, but he does not admit their heroism. He admits that the United States are happy and prosperous, owing much to their hardy agriculturists, their merchants, and their manufacturers ; but those who are to be admired are Washington, Franklin, and Lafayette. Of Frenchmen who might be cited for personal sacrifices, he mentions Carnot, who died poor after having organised during many years the military power of France, and Dupont de l'Eure, who then lived in a room for which he paid thirty-six francs a month, and General Bertrand, who followed Napoleon to St Helena.

We notice this pamphlet in due course as one of the productions of Beyle, but the reader may at once perceive its one-sided character as applied to modern states. It is somewhat a reproduction of the Greco-Roman pedantry of the first French republican period. Woe to the modern state that has not patriotic citizens and hardy soldiers ; but woe also to the state that has not sufficient financial means to organise her defensive forces commensurate with modern science, and to sustain and prolong that defence in the evil days of foreign aggression.

There was humour and pleasantry in this pamphlet of Beyle's, but matched, if not surpassed, by an epigram by an unknown hand, which appeared in one of the journals of the opposite party, and which ran thus—

“Imprudent détracteur d'une honorable école  
Beyle au nom d'industrie a fremi tout entier  
Que lui fait donc ce nom ? craint-il qu'on l'accolle  
À son titre de chevalier ?

How Beyle must have laughed at couplets which remind us of

“Le Français né malin créa le vaudeville.”

There have been in our own time a great number of English words introduced definitively and incorporated with the French language, such as *stock*, *sport*, *docks*, and all the vocabulary of horse-racing, such as “sweepstakes” and “steeplechase,” &c. It is true that some of these interlopers are applied in odd ways. We know that the London docks are dépôts of much merchandise, and one has nothing to say against these docks in a French port, but when we see the “docks” of a Hebrew slopseller in the third floor of a tall house on the Boulevard or the Rue de Rivoli, it is difficult to avoid a smile. Beyle also wished to add a useful word to the French vocabulary, which was the word *puff*, in the French verb form *poffer*. In December 1825 he wrote the following letter to the Paris newspaper called the *Globe* on this subject:—

“When a new idea presents itself, a new word must be coined for it; for instance, in these constitutional days, we talk of our budget, which was unknown in the time of Voltaire. In those days of fair favourites, there was no budget but an Abbé Terray and a pretty little bankruptcy. I propose to adopt the word *poffer*, after the English *puff*, which means to vaunt anything with effrontery in the newspapers, for we have the thing puff, but not the word. This word ought to be received with applause, if your readers could understand the *Puff* of Sheridan's ‘Critic.’ He has wit; he is not ashamed of his trade, and tells pleasantly how he means to succeed, whether in praising an epic poem like Philippe Auguste, a new boot blacking, or a new rouge powder. Minus the wit of Sheridan's *Puff*, I see folks of this sort every day in Paris. Now if this useful new industry was introduced into the literature of Europe, it would be no longer necessary for M. B—— L—— [probably the Academician M. Baour Lormian] to praise himself, nor needful that a certain individual should

sign himself the 'French Polybius' in the articles which he sends to the *Constitutionnel*. Surely we stand in need of the word *poffer*. What else is the bookseller L'Advocat doing for the memoirs of Madame de Genlis?"

In the summer of 1826 Beyle paid a visit to England, chiefly to regulate matters with Mr Colburn, the publisher of the *New Monthly Magazine*. In Beyle's private correspondence with his friends in Paris, we find on the subject of England and the English a curious mixture of absurd and groundless national prejudice and ignorance, and at the same time some views fundamentally just. According to Beyle, it was solely to save the aristocracy from the people that Mr Pitt accumulated such a debt. Beyle does not see that the war was a truly national war, against that foreign people whom the English *at that time* regarded as their hereditary enemies, headed by a man whom ninety-nine Englishmen out of a hundred looked on as a pure military despot at home, and still more so in Germany, the Netherlands, and the Peninsula. But Beyle was right in the opinion that a nation that wishes to manufacture cheaply should not overwhelm itself with debt and consequent taxation. John Bull had his anti-Gallican whistle, but paid too dearly for it.

To a French materialist like Beyle, our bitter observance of the Sabbath, the enormous church sinecures of the pre-Reform Bill period, and our hypocritical cant, appeared so offensive that he did not see the vast fund of sincere piety which is the solace of millions in England. This man, who had much delicacy and much tenderness in his nature, seems never to have felt that religion is the highest and most poetical of all attachments, although most of its forms break down under a rigorous realist logic. Beyle did not reflect that the puritanical gloom of the English character arose from a great national and popular movement, however inconsistent it may be with either the philosophic or the truly Christian spirit. On this subject Beyle writes as follows :—

"The Corsican peasant forms a complete contrast to the workman of Birmingham and Manchester. My opinion is, that the Corsican does not work enough, but I believe him to be more happy than the Englishman. What inclines me towards a Corsican is, that his religion is infinitely less maleficent than that of the Englishman. The only day that the English workman has to himself is Sunday. But Sunday is made the dullest day by absence of amusement. Add to this the melancholy climate, and



I am persuaded that the Jesuits do not inflict so much evil on the Papists, who are the most degraded by superstition."

The greater part of 1826 was occupied by Beyle in composing his novel of "Armance," which was published in the following year, and was either ignored by the Paris press or rudely handled, so as to offer a contrast to the favour with which "Rome, Naples, et Florence" and the "Life of Rossini" had been received by the *élite* of the Paris intelligence; but M. Colomb informs us that Beyle thought highly of the work. "Ce livre fut, au reste, pour Beyle, ce que sont parfois, pour les parents, des enfants rachitiques dénués d'intelligence, ou d'un mauvais naturel; c'est à dire l'objet de sa predilection."

The natural bent of Beyle's mind was towards criticism—that is to say, not creation or composition, but analysis or decomposition. But there are few critics who do not think themselves capable of being adepts in the higher and much more difficult function of the creation of an original work of imagination. It is true that when a good framework has been set up, and when interesting situations have been created, the critical faculty may be well brought out in analysing the feelings of the parties; but it is the accessorial and not the leading requisite. In some cases, as in that of Balzac, the power in this accessorial function is so great that we are apt to forget the deficiencies of the framework; but this was not the case with the unlucky "Armance."

This novel was intended to depict a phase of Paris society during the Restoration, and at that period of it when the milliard of indemnity, voted at the instigation of Charles X., was about to restore, in some degree, the fortunes of the old noblesse, which had disappeared in the Revolution. In the first chapters there is a certain interest in the study of the society which is not unpleasing; but as the work advances we find sudden and improbable incidents and accidents to happen to colourless or untruthful characters, so that we seem to see wax figures set in motion by machinery instead of real flesh and blood, truth and nature of the Scott and Edgeworth novels, which at that time stood supreme in public opinion on both sides of the channel.

"Armance" was one of Beyle's *fiascos*, and betrayed the prentice hand. M. de Malivert, junior, is in love with Mademoiselle Armance de Zohiloff, but so violently in love that he maltreats his own valet without a reasonable motive, and then compensates his bodily injuries with money. A marquis appears in the middle of the romance, and is killed off in a duel at the end of a chap-

ter. M. de Malivert is happy enough to get the affections and the hand of his lady-love, and, not satisfied with his happiness, he shortly after the honeymoon sails for Greece as a Philhelline ; but instead of shedding his blood for Greek emancipation, commits suicide, without any adequate cause, when within sight of the mountains of the Morea.

If the reader could forget the multiplicity of sudden and improbable incidents thrust in parenthetically, so as to destroy the idea of a picture of real life, there is much painting of the passion of the hero and heroine that is good, and the incidental reflections on things in general in 1826 are those of a man of intelligence and high culture. But of what avail is the best embroidery on groundwork of the false and incongruous ?

## CHAPTER XXVII.

Beyle Revisits Rome—His Acquaintance with Canova—Is taken for a Different Person—Roman Society—Cardinal Consalvi—The Dimidoff Amateur Theatricals—Torlonia the Banker.

IN the autumns of the years 1825, 1826, and 1827, Beyle made short and rapid trips to Italy, in order to collect materials for his forthcoming work on Rome. He liked Rome, because it was "tranquil as a village, with no military foppery, and no noisy general of brigade marching with an air of importance. Cardinal Consalvi, the prime minister, returns home on foot like a citizen. In Rome nobody is in a hurry. The Cardinal has fine eyes and prominent eyebrows. What a pity that this intelligent man should not have read Adam Smith and Jeremy Bentham ! According to my idea the perfection of society is at Rome ; it is there that people indifferent to each other have by intercourse found the secret of giving each other the greatest number of agreeable moments. The unquiet vanity of Paris is rare at Rome. A gentle feeling of benevolence, which, after the first little service that has been rendered, changes to friendship, unites the people, who see each other often."

Beyle, as the laughing philosopher, accepted all the appearances of cordiality so as to make things pleasant. Truly says Thackeray, "Society is a mirror ; laugh to it, and it will laugh back in your face ; frown, and it will frown."

Beyle went one evening to see Canova at the house of the lady with whom he had the most intimate relations. They spoke of Correggio, and Beyle was pleased when he found that he had understood the genius of this painter as Canova had understood it. Beyle respected the character of Canova, inasmuch as he had refused the French Legion of Honour in consequence of the oath which, in the time of the First Empire, his conscience would not permit him to swear (for Canova, although a man of gallantry, was at the same time very religious) ; but Beyle found fault with one thing in him—that, from excessive prudence, he would

criticise no artist however bad. But Canova was so full of real honeyed benevolence, that one may doubt if prudence was really the right word in this case. Canova talked with Beyle of his projects. He said :—"I intend to execute the statue of a young girl awakened by hearing her lover sing ; but I should easily fall into immodesty in such a subject, so I am going to have a little Cupid to awake a nymph with a lyre. This figure, remote from reality, will take away all idea of indecency."

At the Falls of Terni, Beyle had a droll adventure, arising from his extreme resemblance to a French landscape painter, a M. Etienne Forby, who had passed twenty-six days at the falls. All the people of the environs had the same idea, and spoke to him as Signor Stefano. Beyle afterwards had his second self pointed out to him at a café in Rome, and declared himself to have been the reverse of flattered by the mistake of the Terni peasants.

The environs of Rome, that magnificent country which has counted for so much in the inspirations of a Claude, a Duguet, a Schnetz, and other painters, was a perpetual source of pleasure to Beyle ; those delightful wooded slopes of Albano, with the sea of deep azure visible through the branches of full-grown umbrageous forest trees, filled him with enthusiasm. A more beautiful promenade certainly cannot be imagined then that which extends from Albano to Frascati. The verses of Virgil and the other pastoral poets, with faun and hamadryad, come back to the memory in these cool, delightful shades. Beyle thought this country finer than the banks of the Lago di Como, for they have a more sombre and majestic sort of beauty. "We have crossed," writes Beyle, "the forest from Castel Gandolfo to Frascati by delicious roads, and visited the Aldobrandini and other villas, which caused us the sin of envy, for the grandes who constructed those beautiful houses and gardens have obtained the finest union of sylvan and architectural beauty."\*

The Romans of the lower classes have the notable characteristic of the South—a predominance of crimes against the person over those against property, and of which the two chief motives are political hatred or jealousy in love affairs. Civilised Italy stops at the Tuscan frontier ; all southwards we see that the great mass of the population is semi-barbarous. The order and relative cleanness of Tuscany ceases at Acqua Pendente. Velletri, Spoleto,

\* President de Brosses is very full and amusing on this very region.

and all the Roman towns, are nests of filth and discomfort ; but when we cross the Neapolitan frontier, the change is, if possible, from bad to worse.

When Beyle was in Rome a murder from jealousy was committed by a young butcher, who poniarded his rival. Beyle appears to have gossiped with a young neighbour who discussed the question of whether the murder was justifiable or not, half maintaining that it was justifiable, as the rival had been duly warned not to visit the woman's house. In order to make closer acquaintance with this gossiping neighbour, who had a pretty collection of arms, Beyle, in showing him his pistols, gravely explained that he had aided one of his relatives in getting quit of an enemy, and in consequence of this accident he, Beyle, had to decamp from his native province ; and it appears that the maintaining this hoax or quiz procured him an amount of consideration quite characteristic of the latitude of southern Italy.

Another of Beyle's gossips was a young barber of Trastevere. The barber was fat and full of energy, and when he related anything he added, "Signore, what can you expect? we are under priestly government."

The most notable figures of the society of Rome in the time of our fathers appear to have been met by Beyle. We have already mentioned Canova, who, although at that time in the decline of life, was at the zenith of his reputation. On the subject of this eminent man Beyle gives us a rather naive idea of international *meum* and *tuum*, which I quote for the reader's amusement.

"Canova came three times to Paris, the last time as packer-up [*emballeur*]; he came to take back the statues which had been handed over to us by the Treaty of Tolentino, so that we were robbed of what we had gained by a treaty. Canova did not understand this reasoning. Having been brought up in Venice in the time of the old government, he could understand only the right of the strongest. Treaties appear to him to be only a vain formality."

The French Republic and Empire as the incarnation of international law and treaty obligations is certainly a novelty. The conquerors of Arcola and Rivoli were justified in imposing treaties and appropriating works of art, but the liberators of Europe in 1813-14 had no such right to impose treaties, and the restoration of the works of art was robbery ! Really, making every allowance for national partisanship, one must wonder that a philosopher should actually print and publish such a specimen

of logic. Let us charitably set it down as one of those Beylisms which the good-natured man knew how to make an amend for by many strokes of liberality and justice on other topics.

Consalvi, the popular cardinal and minister of Pius VII., was the principal person of the Roman society in the years that immediately followed the restoration of the Pope to his capital, after the exile of Fontainebleau. He met a charming young man in the drawing-room of a diplomatist, who knew by heart twenty of the finest airs of the composer of the "*Matrimonio Segreto*," and sang them with perfect expression. Whatever the cardinal called for was sung at desire by no less an artist than the then youthful Rossini; and those airs recalling the tender friendship which Consalvi had for Cimarosa, brought the tears into his eyes. Consalvi interested himself for the family of Cimarosa after the composer's death, but his son appears to have been one of those unlucky wights for whom nothing could be done. Consalvi had employed Canova to execute a monumental bust of Cimarosa, which bore the inscription—

"A Domenico Cimarosa.  
Ercole Cardinale Consalvi."

The millionaires Dimidoff and Torlonia could scarcely escape the sketch-book of such an observer as Beyle. The former is described as "rich and benevolent, making a collection of heads by Greuze, and relics of St Nicholas,"—a compound of a national Russian and an art dilettanti in Italy. He had a French vaudeville company for himself and friends, but the puritanism of papal Rome took umbrage at such interjections as *pardieu*, or at such profane names as St Leon, and at the Thursday night performances encroaching on Friday morning.

Torlonia was an original figure. This speculator, who began selling ribbons by the yard, and became the banker of all the wealthy foreigners who crowded to Rome, used in his old age to relate the rivalry of Roman princes for the hand of one of his daughters.

"Every winter," writes Beyle, "the society is enlivened by some story of his coolness and sharp practice in money matters, and the rage of some Englishman dissatisfied with the rate of exchange. But he makes this up to his customers by charming balls, worth forty francs admission," cynically applying the Torlonia metallic standard to his social entertainments. These balls are mentioned by Beyle as having been on a scale of royal

magnificence. The interior gallery facing the courtyard communicated with the dancing rooms, which were a blaze of splendour, and in one place was a group of statuary by Canova, illuminated by lights disposed by Canova himself. "Observe," says Beyle, "a little old man in a white waistcoat, in the midst of the most beautiful Roman and English ladies, who relates how, by an adroit ruse, he bought those splendid mirrors at Paris and London wholesale, in the character of a carver and gilder, who had a commission from Torlonia to purchase them with ready cash at a low rate." "Torlonia," said Lady N——, "should not be at his balls; his daughter should do the honours."

These anecdotes must be taken with a grain of salt. When a man makes a fortune of such colossal proportions, he cannot escape being an object of malignant envy; he may be laughed at, but in reality has the best reason to laugh at the expense of those who make him a subject of ridicule.

As to the Government of that day, Beyle says pleasantly, but quite truly, "You have read Mill, Ricardo, Malthus, and all the authors of political economy. Figure to yourself the contrary to all the rules of administration which they recommend, and you will find them to be followed at Rome with the best intentions in the world."\*

Beyle supposed the great Italian revolution would take place between 1840 and 1848, and he adds, "*Y aura-t-il cascade ou pente douce?*" Well, he was not far wrong in his guess as to the practical beginning of the revolution, for the ground had been well prepared by Mazzini and the Giovine Italia. There have been altogether five cascades: in 1848, in the following year, in 1859-60, in 1866, and 1870, the whole forming a *pente accidentée* rather than a *pente douce*. Rome is now the capital of Italy; and of the temporal power, we may say, as Lord Seafield at the Union, "It is the end of an auld sang."

\* Travelling in Italy after the accession of Gregory XVI., I remember being told that Cardinal Macchi, one of his ministers, had opened the prisons and let loose on society many of the most infamous criminals, who had not served the time to which they had been condemned, from no other motive than to save a petty sum to the Roman exchequer.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

1828-29—Beyle's Sketches of Charles X., of the Duke and Duchess d'Angoulême, and of the Duke of Orleans, afterwards Louis Philippe—Beyle furnishes Notes on Roman Cardinals for Charles X.—Beyle Hypochondriac—Meditates Suicide—Publishes his "Promenades in Rome."

DECEMBER 1827 was within two years and a half of the revolution of 1830, and the impressions of Beyle as to the personages and events of the close of the Restoration were most just and judicious. The Polignac ministry was not yet named, and therefore Beyle was not held to foresee that which a majority of the intelligent men of Europe did foresee on that nomination. Beyle's observations in a letter to his London correspondent, Mr Sutton Sharpe, are nevertheless interesting, for we see clearly that the hearts of the French nation would have warmed to the Duke d'Angoulême as Louis XIX., if Charles X. had not thrown away his crown, with a shortsightedness rarely paralleled. Beyle gives in succession admirable portraits of the King, the Duke and Duchess d'Angoulême, and of Louis Philippe. In regard to the king, who was pronounced by one of his most intelligent and judicious councillors to be still the giddy Count d'Artois of 1789, he writes:—

"A king incapable of connecting two ideas, being an old libertine used up by a stormy youth; not exempt from acts of weakness, and even unscrupulousness; adoring ultra principles, and despising all who are not noblesse, yet courting the people from fear. In other respects a good sort of a man, and without the hypocrisy of his brother" (Louis XVIII.)

"A dauphin without education, of incredible ignorance, but a very honest man, honest even to heroism, if we consider that until six-and-thirty he lived in his little court, composed of the most foolish men in Europe, whose sole occupation was to calumniate the French people and the Revolution. This prince is quite reasonable. His esteem for Messrs Portal and Roye is notorious. His administration, if he reigns, will be Right



centre. He will keep his oaths, and in this respect his sincere piety will be useful to France. The same sobriety characterises the conduct and conversation of his wife. Unfortunately she has a narrow understanding; her mind can embrace little at once, and she gets other people to show her the essential parts of things, but when she has understood a thing she retains it. She regrets that the higher noblesse should have so little intelligence, and that recourse must always be had to the third estate.

"The Duke of Orleans (afterwards Louis Philippe) has finesse, cunning, and some avarice, with a great fund of good sense. This administration, during the minority of the Duke de Bordeaux, would be Left centre [*centre gauche*]. He keeps aloof from the ultra party of the Faubourg St Germain, who look on him as a Jacobin. His mind has the cast of a moderate English Whig peer.

"All those French who have time to think, and possess pecuniary means, are Left centre. They wish the execution of the charter, and slow and prudent progress without any shock. These people have great expectations from Louis XIX., and look on the government of Charles X. as a necessary evil. People expect Charles X. to declare himself against the charter if he could muster the requisite courage. People are attached to M. de Villèle, as to a minor evil of the two. They are afraid of his having a successor belonging to the Jesuit cabal."

The reader may in this see how justly Beyle judged of the situation, at a time when even the Duke de Guiche, the "Menin du Dauphin," said, "Ces Cagots nous perdront."

Beyle was, as a matter of course, also well acquainted with the Italian, and particularly Roman politics; and a year later, on the death of Pope Leo XII., Beyle was asked for notes on the different cardinals likely to be the candidates for the tiara, and likely to suit or to disagree with French interests. These notes pleased Charles X., who, after a life of great gallantry and gaiety, was very proud of his function of eldest son of the Church, and took a strong personal interest in papal affairs. M. de Chateaubriand was at this time French minister at Rome, in succession to Mathieu de Montmorency; and he owed this quite as much to the wish of the king to have him out of the way of domestic politics, as to other claims, literary, political, or personal. At first there was some idea of pushing the election of one of Beyle's favourites, but it was thought best not to interfere with

the regular action of M. de Chateaubriand in his proper sphere. Cardinal de Gregorio, recommended by Beyle, failed by one vote, so that Cardinal Castiglioni became Pope Pius VIII.

But we have been, in point of time, rather anticipating, and return to the regular course of our narrative. In the year 1828 Beyle suffered great depression of spirits; for although habitually gay, he had occasional attacks of the blue devils, so that he even meditated suicide. There can be no doubt that this was in part owing to pecuniary embarrassment, consequent on the temporary suspension of payment by a bookseller in London, but also owing to the heavy travelling expenses incident upon his repeated visits to Rome, to prepare his work on the subject of that city. Of course I use the word heavy in relation to Beyle's very small income. But this depression, there can be little doubt, must have been also increased by some physical and internal cause; for Beyle had not a perfectly sound constitution, and did not seem to have a sufficient knowledge of his constitution to enable him to maintain the serenity of mind requisite for those who live by intellectual labour. At a more advanced stage of this biography we shall have something more to say of his health, at a time when his constitution began to break down. Beyle made, in the course of 1828, no less than four wills; and in one dated the 14th November, he begs pardon of M. Colomb, his friend and executor, "for the annoyance to which he was to be subjected by an inevitable event."

By another, of the 4th December, he begs M. Colomb to terminate the "*Promenades in Rome*," and to correct the proofs of the work, the printing of which had been begun. But Beyle got over the fit of low spirits, and with his own hands completed the correction of the proofs.

The "*Promenades dans Rome*," which appeared in two volumes in 1829, was eminently successful, and cut short his atrabilious humours. His friend Colomb, as editor of an edition of the "*Letters of the President de Brosses*," had much occupied himself with Italy and Italian art, and therefore supposes himself able to give Beyle sound advice on the subject. The original idea was merely to give three hundred pages of descriptions of the principal monuments of Rome. In July 1828 Beyle gave Colomb the manuscript to read, who found in it the germ of a good work, and advised him to produce a complete picture of ancient and modern Rome, comprising the arts, politics, and society. The extent of such a work rather deterred Beyle, but

Colomb promised to find the materials for such a work; and at the publication Beyle wished, in the preface, to acknowledge the services which Colomb had rendered him. Colomb declined, as he states, from a conviction that Beyle would thrust him too much into the foreground. But I am not sure that the work has been the better of such additions as Colomb suggested. In fancy it is far inferior to "Rome, Naples, et Florence;" and though much fuller of purely historical and archæological matter, the *verve* of Beyle is too much attenuated by matters of a mechanical nature. There was far more of the dynamical in the "De l'Amour," the "Vie de Rossini," and "Rome, Naples, et Florence." For a mere guide to Rome, one goes to a tabulated handbook. In short, I believe that, with the best intentions, Colomb rendered no service to his friend, and that the genuine original, but more brief, "Promenades dans Rome" would have been a purer emanation of the genius of Beyle.

As years rolled on, the gaiety of Beyle diminished, but he gained that full insight into the mechanism of society which we find in the pages of a Theophrastus or a La Bruyère. As the illusions of life disappeared, the mind became more sober, cool, and philosophical. "All is vanity and vexation of spirit" might be the motto of a few observations marked by acumen and pregnant brevity, which I find in his private correspondence in November 1829, and which I condense. The subject is "People who make themselves talked of by the public."

Beyle classifies them as follows:—

First, Those who shine by their wealth, fortune, honours, and prosperity; who are much talked of while they live, but who after death pass out of notice; court favourites, millionaires of the financial circle; celebrated *roués* and dandies. In short, people who make a splash, not being men of genius.

Secondly, Men of great fortune and honour, acquired by really superior qualities, such as soldiers and statesmen — Colbert, Turenne, Marshal Saxe, &c., &c.

Thirdly, Those who think only of the pleasure of doing their work, contenting themselves with having just a bare subsistence during their lives, such as Rousseau, Lafontaine, Tasso, Schiller, and Corneille. These people, in their moments of discouragement, console themselves by thinking of posterity.

Fourthly, Men of letters who make a noise, and make money by puffs and lucrative appointments, and by catching hold of statesmen and grand seigniors as academicians; also literary

toadies, who coalesce with men of fashion against poor men of real genius. These pedants have credit with enriched people, having some taste for the arts. Paris is full of middle-aged people with decorations on their breasts, who are wearers of respectable countenances ; these people have good manners and ennui. Then generals, bankers, &c., &c., who profess to be amateurs of literature and art, and who applaud the Pastas and Malibrans, but whose critical observations show that they have not the least comprehension of what they are talking of.

It is certainly to the third of these classes that Beyle himself belonged. His delight was in literary labour, with just a bare subsistence. Did he in his moments of discouragement console himself by thinking of posterity ? Nothing transpires to show that he had so exalted an opinion of himself. Much that he wrote will be certainly forgotten, and each generation that removes itself from his period will have less enjoyment in works that are so allusive, and abound much in references to men and matters of contemporaneous and fleeting interest ; but a portion of the cargo of Beyle will certainly float down the stream of time. The profound and philosophical treatise on the passion of love will occupy a permanent place in European literature, and no future student of the culture, history, national character, and manners of Italy in the first half of the nineteenth century will omit to give a prominent place in his library to "Rome, Naples, et Florence," to the "Life of Rossini," to the "Promenades dans Rome," and the "Chartreuse de Parme."

## CHAPTER XXIX.

Revolution of 1830—Beyle's Friends in Power—He is named French Consul at Trieste—Publishes the Novel "*Le Rouge et le Noir*"—Beyle's Analysis of the Novel-reading Public in France—Critical Examination of "*Le Rouge et le Noir*."

WE have now arrived at 1830 and its Revolution. This great event changed the destiny of Beyle. It put him at ease in money matters, but at the same time the career of a consul in Italy, to which he was thereupon appointed, exiled him from the intellectual society of Paris. There is, of course, much to be said on both sides of the question. Although quite different from a novel of the English school, the "*Chartreuse de Parme*" is one of his chief passports to posterity, and without a renewal of his acquaintance with Italian society, and the fixed official income and consequent tranquillity of mind, it is to be doubted if such a work could have been produced. The life of a miscellaneous writer in Paris has much that is agreeable; he can obtain the largest possible consumption of ideas, especially in literary or in political society, at the *foyer* of the opera, and in the exhibitions of art. But there are the necessities of the day to be provided for, and in the perpetual whirl of occupation the requisite concentration of the mind on a longer work is very difficult. The dream of Beyle was a professorship of the history of the fine arts, which would have enabled him to remain in Paris, but this was not realisable.

A fortnight after the Revolution of 1830 Beyle writes to his London correspondent, Mr Sutton Sharpe, on the disappearance of the trees from the Boulevard.

"PARIS 15th August 1830.  
71 RUE DE RICHELIEU.

"To enjoy the spectacle of this great Revolution one must lounge (*flaner*) on the Boulevard. Apropos, there are no more trees from the Rue de Choiseul to that Hôtel de St Phar where we lodged some days on arriving from London in 1826. They have been cut to make barricades on the causeway of the Boulevard. The

shopkeepers are pleased to have got rid of them. Have you not in England found the secret of transplanting trees as thick as one's thigh? If you know a man capable of this, procure us the means of re-establishing the Boulevard."

It does not appear that Beyle was one of the combatants, or even of the political aspirants of the Revolution of 1830; but the Countess Destutt de Tracy interested herself for him, and at the end of September he was named Consul at Trieste. On the 29th he writes to Sainte Beuve, then a distinguished poet, and subsequently the Nestor of French critics—

"I have just heard that I have been named Consul at Trieste. People say that nature is beautiful there, and that the isles of the Adriatic are picturesque. My first consular act is to engage you to pass six months or a year in the house of the Consul. You would be as free as at the hôtel. We should see each other only at table; you could give yourself up entirely to your poetical inspirations."

As will be seen in the sequel, Beyle himself had only a brief hôtel existence in Trieste; but these lines indicate friendship and attachment. To return to our story. Beyle sympathised cordially with the Revolution, for he was an admirer of Royer Collard, of Benjamin Constant, and of Paul Louis Courier; he, moreover, hated those Jesuits and those royalists who were in Louis XVIII.'s time more royalist than the king. Some weeks after the Revolution of 1830, we find one of those Beylisms or odd ideas bordering on the catwitted which used to amuse his friends, in the shape of a letter to one of the public prints in the following terms:—

"PARIS, 29th October 1830.

"SIR,—There is now a hunt after heraldic arms for France; all the animals are already taken. Spain has the lion; the eagle recalls dangerous recollections. The cock is common, and does not suit itself to the metaphors of diplomacy. (Do diplomatists talk of eagles and lions in private conversation or in public despatches?) Something old is requisite, but how is it possible to build an old house. I propose for the arms of France the No. 29. That is original and true, and the great day of the 29th July (1830) has a varnish of the heroic which forbids pleasantry.

OLAGNIER DE VOIRON.

(Isère.)"

"Le Rouge et le Noir," a novel begun in 1829 and finished

in 1830, was published after Beyle had taken his departure for Trieste in 1831. It is a rather too sensational work, partly illustrative of country life in the south-east of France, and partly descriptive of the old royalist society on the eve of the Revolution of 1830. It is a by no means agreeable production, comprising an adultery, a seduction, an attempt at murder, and its punishment by a criminal tribunal. This novel bears the stamp of the literature then in vogue. Scott had charmed his readers by representing the picturesque turbulence incidental to political convulsions in times bygone; but his successors had gone much further. Dark, cold-blooded, ingenious, or systematic criminality was in fashion. Hence not only the "Nôtre Dame de Paris" of Victor Hugo, and the Porte St Martin dramas of Dumas, but the assize and dungeon literature of the Victor Ducange, Anicet Bourgeois sort, productions of irresistible attraction for the immature taste of the young, but unquestionably belonging to the class of depraved literature.

The principal character of "Le Rouge et le Noir" is Julien, a theological student having fine eyes and some intellectual capacity. He captivates various women in succession, and this proves his ruin. Had Julien had the good fortune to be ugly, it is probable that he would have ended on an episcopal chair instead of the scaffold. He was intelligent and handsome, but taciturn, wayward, and proud, always in conflict between mundane temptations and the call to higher duties.

Julien never got the length of ordination, and was first a tutor in the house of a provincial manufacturer, and by degrees became the paramour of his wife, who was the mother of the youths whose education he tended. The meanderings of this occult passion for a woman, full of fear of discovery, and beset with occasionable fits of repentance, make the business of the first part of the novel. However repugnant to British ideas such a subject may be, it cannot be denied that the reader, if sometimes repelled, cannot escape the interest created by the succession of dilemmas that occur to the guilty pair. The collateral details illustrative of the vain and grotesquely important personages of a small French town are painted with ability. Here is a handling far superior to the apprentice botches of "Armance," although far short of what Beyle subsequently showed he could do in "Le Chasseur Vert" and in "Fedor le Mari d'Argent." There is not in this novel the glowing eloquence of George Sand or the naive Dutch *genre* realism of Balzac, or the ease, polish, and

arch-humour of Charles de Bernard, but one is frequently reminded of all three.

The second part of the novel paints Paris society, Julien being now secretary and librarian of a marquis, and mixed up with the political intrigues of the period of the fall of Charles X. The daughter of the marquis is caught by the fine eyes of the secretary, and reversing the usual order of nature, is the first to declare to him. The vanity of the secretary being captivated so violently, a reciprocal attachment follows, and then a lapse and projects of union, which are crossed by a letter of the repentant but still jealous manufacturer's wife. In revenge the secretary attempts the assassination of the manufacturer's wife, and is tried and guillotined.

Beyle used to divide the novel literature of France into the drawing-room novel (*roman de salon*), and the chambermaid's novel (*roman de femme<sup>d</sup>chambre*). Beyle no doubt intended, with full contempt for the school of the Baron de la Mothe Langon and M. Victor Ducange, &c., &c., that "*Le Rouge et le Noir*" should be a *roman de salon*. Certain parts of the novel fall under this designation—the rivalries of vanity in fussy functionaries and wealthy citizens of a provincial town, and the discussions as to how the antique and shaky edifice of French royalty and aristocracy is to be kept upright against the whistling winds and pelting storms of modern democracy. To this category also belong the really fierce rivalries of ecclesiastics, however gilded over by the courteous dissimulation which Jesuitical education confers; but the whole of the fantastic love of the daughter of the marquis, the nocturnal interviews with rope-ladders, the sensational scene of the criminal trial, and the catastrophe, are pure "chambermaid romance."

But one must admire the great abundance of ideas in "*Le Rouge et le Noir*" in spite of a most disagreeable subject; the various sentiments of the soul, hope, despair, ingenuous explosions of hatred, and sudden movements of tenderness attached to little material facts, all called forth by the incidents of the moment, reveal unquestionable genius. But in the midst of our admiration of the profound and acute, we often wish ourselves with people of less unhealthy souls, and with characters somewhat less impassioned and more prosaic, with a humanity more average, and with the picturesque and dramatic external more ruled by the probable, such as all the great masters of fiction from Le Sage to Scott have known to create.



As after the Revolution of 1830 France began to flood Europe with her novel literature to a previously unheard of extent, it may not be inappropriate to quote from Beyle's private correspondence what he himself has written on these two classes of novel :—

“The great occupation of Frenchwomen in the provinces is to read novels. Provincial morals are pure, for every woman watches her neighbour, and God knows that this police is well done. Another cause of the extensive perusal of novels is that in the last century, under the ancient regime, there were in the provincial towns houses open where men could spend their evenings. What an agreeable existence Napoleon had as a mere lieutenant of artillery at Valence ! All is now altered. Provincial towns are now as stiff as in England, hence the success of the circulating library, that lends novels of authors having no literary reputation in Paris.

“In Paris the chambermaid's novel does not go into the drawing-room. To a Parisian nothing is more insipid than perfect heroes and the innocent persecuted woman of the chambermaid's novel.

“The provincials sometimes read the novel of good society, but they do not always comprehend it very easily ; it is a sort of duty which they get through out of respect to a literary celebrity. Walter Scott and Manzoni have been an exception, and read by town and country. Those details in Scott which weary the Parisian are charming to the provincials.

“The little citizen's wife of the provinces wishes excitement caring little about probability ; the Parisian lady throws aside novels with extraordinary events. Hence the difficulty of writing a novel that is both in the drawing-room of the Parisian fine lady and in the parlour of the provincial middle class.”

Colomb cannot understand how the novel is called “*Le Rouge et le Noir*,” and the present writer is also in the dark on this point. Beyle appears to have been sometimes quite uncertain what titles to give to his novels. In the case of “*Le Chasseur Vert*” he hesitated between four different titles. The subject of “*Le Rouge et le Noir*” was taken from a real criminal trial in Dauphiné. A theological student named Berthet, having had a fit of jealousy after one of amorous passion, fired a pistol at a lady in the church of Brangue (Isère), and was capitally punished for the crime. A tincture of liberalism is traceable through the book, but it appears pale

when we think of that asperity of opposition which the real democracy offered to the first years of the reign of Louis Philippe—an opposition that was not subdued until the sanguinary scenes of the Rue Transnonain and St Merri, and even then only temporarily

I have now noticed two works of fiction by Beyle, and neither of them very favourably. But far be it from me to say that nature had refused him the faculty. Like every other art, it requires apprenticeship. Now Beyle's genius first bloomed in history, belles lettres, musical and fine-art criticism, all of them splendid adjuncts to the imagination of a novelist, but not the thing itself. Scott and Victor Hugo had led Beyle astray into the "bow-wow" style, which was not his real line. I take it that the proper manner of Beyle was somewhat that of Charles de Bernard, in which he could have brought his observation of society into play along with that charming pleasantry which puts the intelligence on the *qui vive* without going the length of puzzling it, which avoids the boisterous comic or the emphatic, and cultivates to a reasonable extent  *finesse*  of expression. A perusal of his unfinished and posthumously published novel "Le Chasseur Vert" has induced and confirmed this opinion. It was written when he was between fifty and sixty years of age, and leaves the impression that had he begun novel-writing as a regular practitioner thirty years sooner, he would have shone in the sphere of the novel of modern society, and that he really did possess much of the philosophic depth of Balzac, with the subdued gaiety in which Charles de Bernard was supreme.

## CHAPTER XXX.

Beyle leaves Paris for the Consulate of Trieste—His Dislike of his New Post—Visits Venice, and Acquaintance with the Comic Poet Burrati—The Austrian Government refuses Beyle the Exequatur for Trieste—Beyle asks for another Consulate—Bellini's Music.

BEYLE received his appointment of Consul at Trieste on the 25th September 1830, and on the 6th November he quitted Paris for his new post.

That Trieste did not please Beyle may well be imagined. For a really serious man of business, Trieste, as *the* port of the Austrian Empire, is a post of much interest. Austria was then under all the illusions of protective duties, and a man who had read the English political economists could by dint of study have made himself useful to both France and Austria at such a post. But practical views on trade do not at all transpire from his correspondence; he had not the faculty of dealing with financial and economical questions, although he may have got through the routine of the commissariat service. His mind was with art, with literature, and with literary society. Writing from Trieste on the 4th December 1830, he says—

"I am like Augustus; I have wished for empire, but in wishing it, did not know what it was. I am overwhelmed with ennui, and yet nobody has been uncivil. This aggravates the evil; but as my patrimony has passed away in experiments, I must accustom myself to do without intellectual conversation.

"I have tried not to indulge in a single pleasantry or to amuse people since my arrival, or to be gallant with the fair sex; in short, I have been moderate and prudent, and I am dying of ennui.

"Thanks to M. Meyerbeer I have found an amiable woman full of naturalness who has many ideas; she is six-and-thirty, and has a large drawing-room painted in fresco, in which at ten o'clock cyprus and cakes are served. There is not and cannot be any question of love. In the large city of Paris I had not

such a house." But this letter leaves us in doubt as to the person who procured him the introduction, for at the close of the same letter he mentions himself as indebted for it to Lady Morgan.

From inquiries made in Trieste I learn that Beyle frequented two drawing-rooms—one that of Princess Porzia, the lady of the governor of Trieste of that period, and that of a Madame Reyer, a lady of literary accomplishments, whom I have more than once heard spoken of in Vienna in the time of the Grillparzers and Von Hammers. This Madame Reyer was intimately acquainted with the well-known and genial Madame Binzer, and with Baron Zedlitz, the author of "Napoleon's Midnight Review." I recollect of Madame Binzer speaking of her as a "rose in an ice-field," which, if complimentary to Madame Reyer, was certainly not so to the good Triestines. Now, as Lady Morgan was at that time in bad odour with the Austrian Government, I conclude that the letter to the Princess, who was musical, was from Meyerbeer, and the letter to the merchant's wife was from Lady Morgan.

A survivor, who knew both ladies intimately, obligingly communicates the following:—"I delayed answering your note in order to make inquiries, but I find that there are no traces of Beyle either at the *Luogotenenza*,\* or at the *Governo Centrale Maritimo*, with which the consuls are in relation; and this, no doubt, arises from his never having had the *exequatur*. As a young married woman, I was charmingly received at the house of the Prince and Princess of Porzia; they were persons of great culture and amiability; their household was on a great footing, with many receptions. Their daughter, now a Countess Sanseverino, was in 1831 a celestial apparition from her beauty, and full of culture and poetry. The house of Reyer was at that time one of the first in trade, and the apartments of Madame Reyer used to be those in which foreigners coming to Trieste used to be presented. She had her singularities, but was a person of great talent, free from every superstition. Her memory was wonderful, and she lived to the age of eighty-four, in full possession of her faculties, having some years previously celebrated her golden wedding."

Another account, from a surviving fellow-countryman of Beyle,

\* The *Luogotenenza* (German, *statthalterei*) is the chancery or office of the civil governor of the province of the so-called "Coast land."

represents him as being deficient in that amiability and good humour for which his nation is so celebrated ; but it must be remembered that Beyle disliked the place, and that the delay and ultimate refusal of the *exequatur* was not likely to improve the temper of a man with so impressionable an organisation.

Beyle complained of the dearness of the apartments compared with the Italian standard of prices, and remarked that the German double window was usual on account of the *bora* or piercing north-east wind ; but he admired the capital pavement, the wide streets, the magnificent aspect of the sea and mountains, and the Dalmatian seafaring people with their semi-oriental costume. "On sent le voisinage de la Turquie." Still he could not reconcile himself to the place, and he writes again in December—

"If I, in 1814, had known my father ruined, I should have made myself tooth-drawer or advocate. But to tremble for the preservation of a place where I am dying of ennui is too much. I cannot complain of anybody. I have found friends solely through Lady Morgan (whose Jacobin opinions I do not share). My life is depicted by my dinner. My high rank exacts my dining alone, which is ennui No. 1," &c., &c. ; for I spare the reader the list of dishes, which are not precisely of the Parisian school, and he follows up the accusations against Trieste by complaining of the stoves, which would give a headache to the most rough Auvergnat.

Such lamentations, coming from a man who had made the retreat from Moscow, are absolutely ridiculous. Having chosen a career, a man must accommodate himself to it without repining or querulousness. What would he have said of a post in the interior of European Turkey or Asia-Minor, where there is no society at all. In short, Trieste was to Beyle *antipathetic*, if we may be permitted an Italian locution ; and he made occasional excursions to Venice to get rid of his blue devils. There he made the acquaintance of the celebrated poet, Joseph Buratti, of whom he gives an interesting notice, and which I quote, as describing Beyle's own life at Venice at this time.

"I used to walk with Buratti every evening from nine o'clock till midnight in December 1830 and March 1831. We supped together after midnight from two o'clock to half-past three in the café next Florian, in the Piazza St Marco. I was attached to Buratti ; he was a good-looking man, of five-and-forty, and well-dressed. His face was refined and charming, but the eye not animated, except after repeating verses. We used to dine at the

house of the Countess Polcastro, where his new verses charmed our evenings. The father of Buratti had left him a ring instead of a patrimony of four hundred thousand francs. I do not know how Buratti managed to have an income of ten or twelve thousand francs. He married his female servant, because, as he said, he was accustomed to her. Towards 1820, he had the only chagrin of his life—the death of a son aged seven years. The Austrian Government detested Buratti, but did not dare to exile him ; for the forms of this government, established by Maria Teresa and Joseph II., did not allow it. The present police interprets the code as much as it can in its own way, but cannot alter it. Buratti said often to me, ‘I will die in exile—I will be obliged to fly.’”

The possession of the Italian provinces could not be considered as otherwise than a misfortune for Austria. The conciliation of Italian populations was, even allowing for any amount of skill and tolerance, impossible for a German power, except on a principle which at that time was not dreamt of, namely, federation, with complete national autonomy. Austria, in 1814 and 1815, ought to have held fast to one principle, viz., like Prussia, to have sought her compensations solely in Germany. One confederation in Germany was *then* a great mistake. There ought to have been two such confederations, a Southern and a Northern—an Austrian and a Prussian. Northern Italy in that case would have been spared an unpopular government, and Austria, freed from Italy, and consolidated in Catholic Southern Germany, could have more freely fulfilled her proper function of guarantee of the European balance of power.

• Anxiety and apprehension inevitably characterised the rule of Austria in Italy. She started in 1814 without the slightest intention to rule on any other principle than that of paternal mildness ; but soon hatred begot hatred, exasperation begot exasperation, and, even at the least harsh epochs, there was inevitable anxiety and apprehension. The years 1830 and 1831 were years of abortive revolutionary movements in Italy ; it is therefore not at all surprising that the Austrian Government refused its exequatur to Beyle, who had passed so many years in the most liberal circles of Milan, which was a most anti-Austrian city. Beyle writes on the 24th December—

“I have just received a letter from the Marquis de Maison, ambassador in Vienna, who tells me that M. de Metternich has refused the exequatur, and given orders to the ambassador at

Paris to protest against my nomination. The first idea suggested by my misanthropy was to write to nobody. Nevertheless I write to Madame de Tracy, and beg her to decide for me. M. de Tracy, formerly aide-de-camp to Count Sebastiani, and always my friend, may be useful to me.

"I specify nothing. I feel that heat is for me, with my seven-and-forty years of age, an element of health and good humour. Therefore Consul at Palermo, Naples, or even Cadiz; but in God's name no North. I enter into no detail with Madame de Tracy, begging her to decide.

"Adieu! I am in a dark humour. Perhaps our protector will be able to tell you what must be thought of or asked for.

(Signed) "POVERINO."

The following months of uncertainty, and of the position of a bird on a branch, were most annoying to Beyle; the more especially as he had hints from Paris not to be querulous, under penalty of being considered a light-headed man, never satisfied with anything. The want of literary and political food for his active mind was another source of annoyance. He writes in January—

"I read only the *Quotidienne* and the *Gazette de France* [the two organs of the expelled dynasty], in order to keep up my dignity. I do not allow myself the smallest pleasantry, and am as moral and truthful as *Telemaque*. You may imagine the extent of my blue devils, when I tell you that I read the advertisements in the *Quotidienne*. If ever I meet the editors in the streets of Paris, I will be fit to strangle them."

Beyle, during the winter, suffered much from the ill-famed *bora* of Trieste. According to Beyle, a great wind is when you are always busy holding your hat on your head. A *bora* is when you are in danger of life and limb.

Beyle could not be at a place without saying something of the opera. That of Trieste is generally a good one, according to Italian notions. If Paris, London, Petersburg, and New York have the very first singers, the municipal theatre of Trieste manages usually to possess, during three months of the year, among the best of those that are left behind in Italy, or who have not yet emerged from an Italian to a European reputation.

Beyle heard the "*Straniera*" at Trieste, one of the feebler works of Bellini, but having passages of great pathos and delicacy. The opinions which the most popular of the biographers

of Rossini had of this composer is not uninteresting. Beyle looks on Bellini as a sort of Gluck, his music being a *recitativ obligé*, with "nothing piquant in the orchestra." The recitatives of the "Straniera" are certainly very fine, and Gluck's strength lay chiefly in that tender and impassioned recitative which goes to the soul ; but Beyle judges hastily and harshly. The fine, full, *cantabile* of "Norma" had not yet fixed the fame of Bellini on an imperishable basis, but in "Bianca e Gernando," Bellini had already given some promise of his being a master of an original style, and this promise had been fulfilled in the hyper-melodious "Pirata," which at this time had already been over three years before the public. Even if Beyle had not yet heard this latter delightful production, one cannot agree with the biographer of Rossini when he says, "Bellini is made to enlarge the empire of music as coloured prints got up for peasants enlarge the empire of painting." "Zaira" certainly failed at Parma, but Bellini quickly recovered himself in the "Montecchi e Capuletti," and when one hears the wonderful recitatives of Romeo and Capellio in the first scene of this opera, with a miserably poor orchestral score, the mind reverts to some *quattro-cento* picture of exquisite grace, truth, and simplicity, with an archaic deficiency in the merely mechanical qualities of colour and chiaroscuro. But when the modern Italians talk of Bellini as the "Raphael of music," that is just as absurd an extreme as Beyle's. Raphael had not only supreme power over the mechanical qualities, but the great and comprehensive soul without which no artist, however much a master in grace and tenderness, can aspire to a first place.

I add a few more details about Beyle's residence in Trieste. Trivial affairs of ordinary men are forgotten, those of men of genius are remembered.

When he arrived, his costume and other minor matters gave evidence of his pecuniary straits. Prince Porzia was displeased that Beyle had no uniform to pay his official visits in—(how different from the gay, easy days of 1810 !)—and that he went to him in a riding-coat or surtout. The Prince was probably not then aware that Beyle had no choice, for embroidered uniforms are very costly. It was remarked in the hotel of the Aquila Nera, where Beyle lodged, that his linen had been washed into rags. When the receipt of his salary enabled him to renew his shirts and neckcloths, he thrust his old linen into a certain locality, so as to stop the conduits. This occasioned a lively dis-



cussion with the landlord, which amused the guests of the *table d'hôte*.

It was only at the beginning of Beyle's stay that he frequented the house of Madame Reyer. The Reyers had strong Austrian and Legitimist sympathies, and it was soon seen that the acquaintance did not reciprocally suit. To the end of his stay Beyle was on a footing of intimacy with a Madame Göschen, the wife of a merchant, a lady with free-thinking and liberal ideas.

Beyle's successor in Trieste was M. Levasseur, who had been the secretary of Lafayette, and had accompanied him to America. He had been actively engaged in the "Three Days" of July 1830, had been wounded, and walked about Trieste on crutches. This arrival did not please the Austrian Government of the day. Prince Metternich said to the French ambassador, the Marquis de Maison, "Mais c'est trop fort ; nous faisons un bon débarras de Beyle et on nous flanque le Secrétaire de Lafayette." M. de Maison answered, "Ah, mon cher prince ! les revolutions ne produisent des legitimistes qu'après un très long enfantement."

## CHAPTER XXXI.

1831-33—Beyle is named French Consul at Civita Vecchia—Periods of Beyle's Life—Account of the Impression which Beyle made on the Population of Civita Vecchia—He suffers from Malaria—Carnival in Naples—"Chroniques Italiennes."

AT length Beyle was named French Consul at Civita Vecchia, and it was not until his arrival there that he may have been considered settled in life. He died during a leave of absence at Paris, but during the last ten years of his existence his regular domicile was in Civita Vecchia.

Beyle did not live long enough to realise all the seven ages of Shakespeare, but five periods are distinctly recognisable in his life. The first, that of the schoolboy during the Republic, when fruits and flowers were offered to the Supreme Being in the Temple Décadaire, when, in the moral sciences, the doctrines of a Volney, a Helvetius, and a St Lambert were conservative and orthodox compared with the materialist liberalism of a Baron d'Holbach, and when the exact sciences, supported by the triad, Lagrange, Laplace, and Legendre, were at the phase of culmination. The second period of Beyle's life was that of the sighing lover and man of action, from his entrance into until his exit from the public service ; and it would not be untrue to say, that from the campaigns of Lombardy, where he served as a dragoon officer, to the retreat from Moscow, he sought the bubble reputation at the cannon's mouth. The third period, comprising the residence in Milan from 1814 to 1821, was, according to appearances, the most rose-coloured of his life. It was certainly a period of love and enjoyment ; now at the feet of an Angela or a Matilda ; now adoring Raphael or Correggio, Mozart or Cimarosa. But it was not all dalliance and leisure in a land of delights ; it was also a period of production.

The fourth period, comprising the residence in Paris from 1821 down to the ultimate settlement at Civita Vecchia in 1831, was one of struggle, of effort, and of the illusions of life dis-

pelled, even to discouragement and the borders of despair ; but it was also the period of full mental activity, of mature experience, and of a name at home and fame abroad with that chosen few of whose opinion a really superior man may well be proud. We have now done with this fourth period, and begin with the fifth, which was magisterial and capon-eating, and at the close of which his health declined. *Sans* enjoyment were the declining years of Beyle's life, until the cold memorial slab covered the remains of him that was once counted among the gayest and most brilliant of men.

Beyle proceeded on his journey to Civita Vecchia, but was afraid of falling in with brigands, for all Romagna swarmed at this time with revolutionists, and also with real brigands, who took advantage of the paralysis of public authority which followed the Revolution of 1830, and continued all the following year. Beyle arrived at Civita Vecchia in the beginning of April 1831, and on the 11th he writes of his passage through Rome, "On the 26th of March, on going out of the most beautiful suite of rooms in the world, those of the Palazzo Colonna, where I had been dining with Horace Vernet, his wife, his father, and his daughter (all this had inflamed me), I found in the street—who? the north-east wind, which gave me an abominable cold, which lasts still, and at the same time I lost my purse with twelve napoleons. I took warm water as a sudorific, and got thereby that neuralgia in the bowels which makes one swear."

Beyle found the climate of Civita Vecchia much superior to that of Trieste, inasmuch as there was much more sun and much less cold wind, nevertheless there were subsequently fevers from the malaria, which were worse than the disagreeable but bracing *bora* of Trieste. He got his exequatur from the Papal Government without any trouble, and on the 18th of April entered on his functions, on his return from a short visit to Rome, where he says that "the obtaining the exequatur [after the Austrian refusal] occupied the city of the Cæsars during four days." Three times a month he had the Marseilles steamers, which brought him his letters and journals (this was in 1831), and he was no longer reduced to the meagre diet of the *Quotidienne*; but he complained that at Civita Vecchia there was not the shadow of a society, and that the millionaires of the place went to bed an hour after sunset. This was certainly dull work after the gay midnight suppers with the comic poet of Venice.

While a report, received from Trieste by an aged survivor of

the Beyle period, and one of his fellow-countrymen, represents him to have been ill-humoured and difficult to deal with when in that town, another report from Civita Vecchia, procured for me by the kindness and courtesy of Mr Lowe, states that Beyle made himself popular with the inhabitants of the place by the cheerfulness and affability of his character ("di carattere gioviale e pieno di affabilita"). He took a part in all diversions. He was particularly fond of sea-bathing, and was remarked to be an "excellent eater." He had a fixed idea that he would die of apoplexy, and did not conceal this from his friends; and the paper remarks that "he did die of this malady."

The sea-bathing was certainly to be approved, for it involves a most active and agreeable muscular exertion, which may be enjoyed in the hottest weather, not to mention the magnificent vital force which it imparts to the special electric circulation of the nervous system; but in an apoplectic subject gastronomical propensities are sure to accelerate a fatal termination.

After an attack of fever, he went to Albano, and expresses himself as follows on this lovely locality:—"My health returns but slowly. Great God! what a residence is that of Grotta Ferrata! Ten thousand nightingales, the most beautiful trees, two incredibly beautiful lakes, and a forest into which I wish to ascend, but there are brigands. Unfortunately I was too feeble, and I admired this sugarloaf, called the mountain of Albano, but my heart was dead from physical pain."

He describes his malady as one of languor ("tout va en bouillie tout tombe, tout languit"), and states that his official functions were very troublesome at the departure of each steamer. The great desire of his heart had been a fixed income and a fixed abode in Italy; he now had both, but gratification of the desire brought neither health, intellectual conversation, nor happiness. At Milan he had the Montis, Manzoni, and Byrons, and moreover the Scala during the grand climacterie of Rossini and Vigano; at Civita Vecchia, monotony and malaria. His occasional resource was Rome, where M. de St Aulaire treated him with great politeness. But his frequent non-residence got to the ears of his official superiors. Writing to a friend on the subject of robbery, murder, and non-residence, he thought that, as he was quite innocent of the two former foibles, so common in Southern Italy, he might fairly be pardoned the third.

Naples and Pompeii attracted him in the carnival of 1832, where, at a ball given by M. de Latour-Maubourg, he saw the

obese King, who, later in life, had such moving accidents, and who died on a political volcano that was soon to expel the house of Bourbon from the loveliest sites in Europe.

"I have passed six hours at the charming ball of M. de Latour-Maubourg, where the King was, and, as I assure you, the least-affected wearer of a uniform. He does not walk; he rolls as Louis XVI. did; add to this his enormous spurs and his wishing to dance; but who has not pretensions? He had engaged Mdle. de la Ferronnays, who blushed up to the shoulders at dancing with a king. These shoulders were at two feet from my eyes. The King said, 'Ah! mon Dieu, mademoiselle, I engaged you to a quadrille, but it is a galop, and I do not know that dance.' 'I have rarely danced it myself,' said the young lady. 'Well,' said the King, 'there is the first couple, who don't execute it very well, let us try.' So off went the big, fat, timid King, his spurs inconveniencing him in the most clumsy manner.

"The society of Naples is a mass of itself; the natives are the groundwork and the foreigners only the embroidery; which is the reverse of Rome, where the foreigners form the groundwork of what may be considered society, with the Romans only partially visible. Naples is more noisy than ever; there is the greatest contrast between the vivacity of the Strada de Toledo and the dulness of Rome."

Beyle passed a part of the summer at Aricia, a short distance from Albano, at an inn, where he boarded at a small expense; and here his health and even his enthusiasm for the beautiful were partially restored. If his bugbear at Trieste was the *bora*, at Civita Vecchia it was the *scirocco*. At the French embassy at Rome, M. de St Aulaire exercised a liberal hospitality, and at the French Academy of Painting its director, Horace Vernet, the successor of Guérin, received once a week. But Beyle preferred the purely Italian society, because the French Academy was a section of Paris in Rome. His idea was, "In Rome, live with the Romans." He liked the Italian aristocratic society because it was natural, and not dried up by an education too much tinctured with *bon ton*.

Arnould Frémy mentions that Beyle was not popular with the French students in the Roman Academy of Painting, but the French naval officers who went to Civita Vecchia enjoyed his society; and one of them, mentioning him in one of his letters to a friend in the Ministry of the Marine, wrote "*Facetum habemus*." Beyle, according to Arnould Frémy, when he was

asked at Rome why he gave so extravagant a fee to the waiter of the restaurant, explained that, for his corpulence, he needed an extra strong and convenient chair to sit on. He who laughed at others was himself, with his "bullet body," a not inapt subject for a caricature artist. Beyle had a horror of the cuisine of the Roman restaurants, and their badness suggested to him the celebrated idea of the possibility of taking a pill a day so as to get free of such bad fare, and obtain freedom for intellectual enjoyments. But as Beyle was known to be a great eater, we must set down this as a pleasant illustration of the saying that "Language was given to man to conceal his thoughts."

Beyle, in his private correspondence, states that he was occupied in writing an account of his residence in Paris from 1821, on his return from Italy, down to 1830; and in the autumn of this year he speaks of a work as "*un livre qui peut être une grande sottise*," namely, his confessions, like those of Jean Jacques Rousseau, but with more candour. Besides the campaign of Russia and the court of the Emperor, there were to be the amours of the author. Did his executors find or suppress such a work? On this point I have no information. With regard to his literary career in Paris, from 1821 to 1830, there can be little doubt that, if such a labour had been undertaken, it would have yielded in interest to none of his works. In the two books on Italy, and in his chief novel of Italian society, we find his notions of the Italian character. His "*Mémoires d'un Touriste*" gave his impressions of French provincial society. A physiology of the literary and general society of Paris during the Restoration, by so acute an observer, would, no doubt, have been a valuable contribution to what the Germans call the "culture history" of that period. Such a work would have comprised many interesting notices of the surviving actors in the great dramas of the Revolution and the Empire; some of them become millionaires, like a Barras and a Talleyrand, ostentatious of luxury; others, less fortunate or less skilful, philosophising as they best could in age and adversity. Along with these seniors was a phalanx of young literature, which, a few years later, furnished both the men of letters and ministers to the era of Louis Philippe. There was in this literary sphere undoubtedly brilliant genius, but often reprehensible taste; undoubtedly free, fearless anatomy of the dark side of human nature, but a reckless originality which went to the borders of moral perversity. But many of those men of letters at their earliest essays were

also men of highly practical gifts, and became not only the novelists and the dramatists, but also the orators, the historians, and the diplomatists of the subsequent generation.

Beyle, in spite of his philosophy and his professed contempt for vain honour and decorations, was in reality not above this weakness. In November 1832 we find him writing, "I am as well as possible with my chief, who has just asked for me an ornament that is not worn on the head, but elsewhere; but I am dying of ennui—the true vocation of the animal is to write a romance in a garret."

It was at this same time that we find the origin of the "Chroniques Italiennes." He bought old manuscripts of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the ink of which was almost yellow. These were mostly tragic adventures in the manner of Tallemant des Réaux; and Beyle considered them to be more atrocious and interesting. His first intention was to call them "Historiettes Romaines," and he considered that they would be a useful complement of the history of Italy in the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries. The reader will find in them the usual Italian compound of black treachery, ingenious vengeance, guilty love, and unscrupulous crime, but of which, it must be remembered, in those ages Italy had not the monopoly, but undoubtedly the number of such stories in Italian history seems to be greater than in the annals of the Northern countries.

In January 1833 Beyle again complains of ennui. "I become more stupid every day; I can find nobody to make flying trips with me into the realms of *esprit*. In time I hope to become as great a dunce as my predecessor was. I used to have some games of shuttlecock and battledore with M. de St Aulaire, but since we separated I am quiescent, with no ideas, and no one with whom I can exchange a *demi-mot*."

Beyle takes refuge in the project of a trip to Paris, and he writes, "Thirty or forty days at Paris cost fourteen francs a day, for one is on half-pay. On the other hand, ennui suffocates the poor fellow. He was a hundred times more happy at No. 71 Rue de Richelieu. It would have been better to have had fifty louis d'ors a year more, instead of ten thousand francs a year to spend stupidly on carriages, as I must do on certain days. If I go to Paris, I will only stay thirty days; I will go twenty-five times to the theatre, and will go into no drawing-room except that of Madame de Tracy. Life is advancing, the half century is completed; must I die of ennui from excess of prudence? I

have a thirst for conversation that is not a mere ceremony. I never hear a word that is a surprise to me. I expected to be able to live on reflections on the abstract beautiful, but that is impossible; two years of this regime are ruinous. I go to Lutetia to see the streets, the bookstalls, and the new pieces and actors at the theatres. The months of July and August here are frightful. Imagine at eleven o'clock at night a large drawing-room badly lighted, with open windows, each person taking up the half of a sofa. The *dolce far niente* penetrates every pore, masters the man, and deprives him of three-fourths of the mental power that Heaven has given him. Even the writing of a letter is a serious effort."



## CHAPTER XXXII.

1834-35—Letter from Beyle to the Son of Lafayette on the Death of his Father—Beyle Relieves his Ennui by Excavation of Tombs—He Finds a Bust of Tiberius—Beyle's Health Declines—His Sufferings from Gravel.

IN the year 1834 died one of the most notable men of the two previous generations—Lafayette. That certainly was a remarkable life ! The young marquis of the old monarchy married at sixteen years of age, the volunteer of the American War of Independence, the honest liberal of '89, the opponent of the Jacobins, and the prisoner of Olmütz, the great citizen who in the hey-day of the Empire could be purchased by neither honours nor flattery, and who, by the sheer force of spotless probity, went unscathed through all the parties and all the revolutions of his age of political earthquakes. He was a leading member of the clique of the De Tracys, and therefore Beyle had had frequent opportunities of knowing him. His death, full of years, and of those honours which cabal or intrigue cannot confer, called forth from Beyle a letter of condolence to his son, M. George de Lafayette, dated Civita Vecchia, 26th May 1834, which is not without something of the strange and the odd :—

“Allow me, sir, to express that grief which is general in France, and which is above all felt by the persons known to your illustrious father.

“The purest character of the Revolution has disappeared. As the nations love what is amusing [*“comme les peuples aiment à qui est amusant”*] as much and more than what is useful, I imagine that this man will be placed by posterity immediately after Napoleon and before Mirabeau, who died a sold man, and who was the immediate cause of no event.

“It would be useful to publish a notice, without praise or blame, which would present—

“First, An account of the fortune of General Lafayette at the age of sixteen.

"Secondly, An account of the fortune that he left at seventy-seven years of age.

"The exact date of all the events of his domestic existence and political life.

"I beg to convey my respectful homage to Madame and Mademoiselle de Lafayette," &c., &c.

One can understand Beyle finding Lafayette worthy to be considered a useful man by posterity. But Mirabeau, who, whether bought or not bought, yet by the thunders of an eloquence seldom paralleled in human history, shook down the old régime, surely does not correspond with one's idea of an amusing man. In the concatenation of revolution, the parliamentary eloquence of Mirabeau was the middle link between the ideas of Rousseau and the men of letters, and the acts of Robespierre and the men of blood and rapine. In reality, Mirabeau was not more near the "amusing" than Rousseau or Robespierre, or than their universal heir, Napoleon, who dethroned anarchy to erect Cæsarism.

Beyle suffered much from the heat of the summer of 1834. In September he writes, "I begin to be weary of my profession, and envy the man who, at fifty, has five thousand francs a year. What signifies being in a sporting country full of hare and partridge, if a man has no taste for shooting! What signifies being the second man at Civita Vecchia to a man who hates importance! Try to sell my place to somebody for four thousand francs a year. Yesterday I was at a charming dinner, in the most beautiful place in the neighbourhood, with trees, a cool wind, and thirty-three guests, but not a refined or vigorous idea. I am liked; I am popular; and I had the best piece of a fish of fourteen pounds weight, yet I die of ennui. At night I read Dante; unfortunately I know it by heart, and one line recalls the one following. How many cold characters, how many geometricians would be satisfied in my place! My soul suffers if it cannot flame up. I need three or four cubic feet of new ideas a day, just as a steamer needs fuel."

Beyle was fond of dreaming of the life he would lead at Paris, the city in which he could find this fuel for his soul. There would be the Tuesday evening's soiree at Madame Ancelot's; the Wednesday's, at Baron Gerard's; the Saturday's, at M. Cuvier's; and three suppers a week at the Café Anglais; and he would thus have a window opened upon the intellectual life of Paris. All the morning would be dedicated to literary work, and, if possible, he might become professor of the history of fine

arts. Indeed, it appears that M. Ampère, fils, had promised him his support in his effort to get such a chair founded for him. This was a very pretty project of life, except the three suppers a week at the Café Anglais, which a man afflicted with gout and gravel, and threatened with apoplexy, might avoid. He writes to a lady resident in Paris at this time as follows:—  
“When will you have a well-warmed little drawing-room on the fourth floor of the Rue de Hanovre, and I in this drawing-room, at seven or eight in the evening, chatting with intimate friends, who regard nothing as serious except friendship and love?”

He occasionally thought of the political state of Italy, and he regretted that the fine arts, for which he considered the Italians to be destined, were only used as a *pis aller*. But it appears to us that it could not be otherwise. As an individual cannot enjoy a fine picture or a beautiful piece of music when the mind is agitated by some absorbing or serious business, so nations going through the throes of a revolution must for a time abdicate supremacy in art. German art was suspended during the Thirty Years' War, as every reader of Joachim Sandrart may have seen. A nascent English school of architecture and painting was strangled by our civil wars. It is generally after great struggles, and when nations have arrived at a long, palmy, and pacific period, with superabundant wealth, that schools of art first acquire life or revive after a period of torpor. Now that Italy has solved her political problem, it seems not unreasonable to suppose that another period of industry, of wealth, and of art may supervene in this beautiful land, although the most sanguine Italian may not hope for anything resembling the wonders of the age of a Titian and a Michael Angelo.

But Rome will become once more one of the great cities of the world, concentrating, combining, and reinforcing the artistic genius of the Italian people. Italy's future composers will combine Italian invention with the technical qualities of the North, and without the superficial scoring of a past generation. The art of painting is so low that one may almost despair; but in sculpture, in architecture, in ornamental manufacture, and in those beautiful lapidary arts in which the Italians are the most direct and successful heirs of the ancients, there is a wide domain in which she need fear no superior.

“Italy,” writes Beyle to Sainte Beuve at this period, “is in

love with what she does not possess (*i.e.*, unity and constitutional government), and envies the lilac robe of her sisters, France, Spain, and Portugal ; and even if she had it, she could not wear it. It would require the rod of iron of a Frederick the Second for a generation, hanging assassins and sending robbers to the galleys." Italy has succeeded in weaving the lilac robe, but what difficulties, political, ecclesiastical, and financial !

The interesting labours of the excavation of the Etruscan tombs of Tarquinius, three hours off, occasionally occupied Beyle ; and great was his satisfaction when the diggers came upon and exposed to sight a mummy of three thousand years, with a crown of gold encircling his skull, which a short exposure to the air reduced to dust or human mud. At another locality, near Civita Vecchia, there was found a noseless bust of Tiberius, which, after repair, was much admired, and which Beyle wished to present to Madame Molé as a mark of gratitude. Count Molé, without being one of those energetic men of genius who leave their stamp on an age, was, nevertheless, a leading statesman of the first half of the nineteenth century. Although not belonging to the ancient *noblesse d'épée*, he nevertheless bore one of the historic names of France. He had been a minister of Napoleon the First. During the Restoration he had acted with the liberal party. He was from 1830 a minister of Louis Philippe, and was respected even by his opponents, in consequence of the well-balanced moderation and integrity of his character, and the judicious manner in which he treated political questions in the chamber. We may pronounce him to be a shining mediocrity of the days of our fathers.

"If M. Dijon is not on horseback (*i.e.*, if M. de Molé is no longer in office), it is perhaps a favourable moment to offer him the Tiberius, which I long to transfer to him. I am happy to have found in the cruel Emperor not a means of paying a debt, but of showing acknowledgment. People came to me three or four times a month to see the fine eyes of Tiberius."

It was in this year that Beyle received the Legion of Honour ; but, strange to say, he was displeased at receiving it as a man of letters, and not as a public functionary ; and yet he was constantly turning into ridicule, as solemn bigwigs or swaggering military men, those who sought and paraded such decorations.

Beyle's state of health now began to occupy him, although still destined to pass seven years in the land of the living. His correspondence with a physician in Geneva throws light on his

physical state at this period. Symptoms of chronic ailments are somewhat repulsive, but in the case of a man of original genius, we desire to know all personal details. In how many cases is the physical basis of intellectual power neglected even by men of the most eminent talents! Beyle was not a drunkard, but he enjoyed the pleasures of the table, and he had wisely given up coffee, but only to fall into tea, one of the most dangerous of slow poisons, and than which none more surely undermines the nervous system. The dried-up mummy-looking aspect of the Chinese, the nation that makes the greatest use of this fatal drug, ought to have decided a man of original intelligence like Beyle against indulgence in this habit, which slowly, but surely, produces consequences so disastrous to the human frame by relaxation of the fibres.

*To Dr Provost, Geneva.*

“ROME, 8th March 1835.

“SIR,—I am full of gratitude to you for the good advice you gave me in December 1832. I have gout and gravel. I am corpulent, very nervous, and fifty years of age. You prescribed for me colchicum and the absolute privation of acids. Returning here, a marriage was proposed to me, and I gave up the main treatment, contenting myself with avoiding acids, and by taking bicarbonate of soda or potash. I emit gravel quite round, weighing a quarter of a grain, and unaccompanied by pain. I pass about two hundred particles of gravel a week, and deprive myself entirely of coffee. For eighteen months the pains in my entrails have entirely ceased; they have not made me swear since the suppression of coffee. I breakfast on tea, and bread, and butter. I drink little wine. When I drink champagne, I feel next day more gay and less nervous, &c., &c.

“HENRI BEYLE.”

It is to be regretted that Beyle did not understand that the cause of the abnormal agglomeration and deflection of the lithic parts of food was imperfect assimilation; that the cause of the latter was deficient nervous power, and that tea was one of the most active agents in keeping at the minimum that capital stock of nervous power which is the most immediate emanation of

vital force itself, that central principle which, harmoniously diffused through the functions (and, if possible, wisely accumulated against accidents), constitutes high health, and is followed by the easy and vigorous performance of the duties of life, and occasionally by the vague unconscious possession of transcendent contentment, and, in the case of men like Beyle, whose calling was in those arts that adorn and console existence, by moments of the brightest and most felicitous inspiration.

# CHAPTER XXXIII.

1835-36—Beyle's Frequent Absences from his Post noticed by the Minister for Foreign Affairs—Beyle's Explanations of his Frequent Visits to Rome and Albano—Italian Energy—Beyle's projected Autobiography.

WITH no prospect of long leave of absence for residence at Paris, Beyle brooded over a change of consulate. Civita Vecchia he abhorred, and Rome, with its savants learned in busts, coins, and cameos, its un-Italian, cosmopolitan society, and its comparative want of music, and of Italian-opera politics (to borrow from Mr Dangle), did not come up to Beyle's ideal of an Italian town, such as Milan had been, with the Scala in the bright Rossinian period, with the pleiad of poets that illustrated it in the years following 1814. It is even doubtful if Milan could have preserved the same charm for the now elderly valetudinarian and unamusable Beyle. The fact is, that when a man is in bad health, the best post is dull ; but if the health be good, the worst is bearable. Beyle had an idea of trying for Gibraltar, but the fear of the spleen and puritanical moroseness of the English character deterred him from following up the idea. Valencia, in Spain, was also in view, and he thought "to pay court to Mdlle. Valencia ; but the character of an imperfectly known young lady is a great problem, a lottery offering a prize or a blank." What particularly annoyed him were the broad hints of frequent non-residence which he got from Paris, so that his ingenuity was taxed for a plausible defence, ennui not being one of the maladies recognised in the public service. The following address to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is curious in its way. It is dated 15th April 1835 :—

"I have not received a letter, written last February, relative to residence in Civita Vecchia. As soon as I receive it I will send the requisite explanations.

"Since my return from Paris in 1833, I have never been farther distant from Civita Vecchia than a seven hours' journey. With regard to my absences in summer, the terrible malaria of this

coast compelled me to retire. M. de St. Aulaire, now in Paris, saw me attacked by a mortal malady, a result of this malaria. The rumour of my death having been circulated a month afterwards in Rome, M. de St Aulaire charged M. B—— to go to Civita Vecchia and put the seal on my papers. M. B—— was about to start, when a letter arrived from me, on which M. de St Aulaire engaged me to pass a month in the good air of Albano.

“Every year I have had the fever, and nervous maladies resulting from it. At Paris I have consulted MM. Chaumel and Koreff.

“I hope to answer by facts easily proved the accusations of persons whose malignity has been demonstrated. Most travellers are dissatisfied with paying fifty-two sous for the *visa* of their passports, and object that they pay nothing at the embassy at Rome. The travellers remain in the bureau, and rarely enter the little room where they bring me the passports for signature. The travellers, soured by the payment of the fifty-two sous, go away saying that they have not seen the consul.”

It appears that the succession to Leghorn, a place with a healthier climate and larger income, had been promised to Beyle, but this expectation was never fulfilled ; so Beyle continued his excavations, and came upon what he supposed to be an Apollo. The excavators were Neapolitans, because, he said, “Nobody round Rome is fool enough to be a labourer ; it is better to be the lay brother of a convent of Capuchins.”

Beyle again passed the summer at Albano, during which there were terrible thunderstorms. One night Beyle was in a company of twenty people playing faro round a large table, when one of those tremendous thunderclaps took place. The ladies fell on their knees and invoked the Madonna, but the vicar began coolly to talk of electric currents, and wished a window to be closed up by a leathern arm-chair. This so shocked the ladies, that they said, “Out upon the impious man who talks of science on such an occasion !”

In one of Beyle's letters of this summer, addressed to a lady in Grenoble, I find a few lines about Madame Récamier, which are not less graphic for being curt :—

“Why, with your *esprit*, do you not create for yourself an existence analogous to that of Madame Récamier ? She is poor ; *her talent consists in breaking everybody's nose with the perfuming censer*, and with trying to be useful to all her friends. She



brings out and attracts merit ; for instance, as soon as M—— was known, she wished to see him in her drawing-room, and offered him a suitable employment in the diplomacy of that period under M. le Duc de Laval."

Madame Récamier had neither birth nor wealth—for the latter disappeared after the unfortunate speculations of her husband in the beginning of the century—but she had beauty beyond compare, and goodness in like measure. She was not insincere in those praises which Beyle records so pleasantly ; she was not a hollow woman, with mere drawing-room tact, but had intense happiness in diffusing happiness around her. Hence a social position and positive power which many women of high rank often envied.

From Beyle's strong Bonapartist leanings we have another anecdote in which Madame Récamier figures.

Madame Récamier was full of attention to the Countess Lipona, sister of Napoleon I., and widow of Murat (hence her name, which was an anagram of Napoli). When this lady was in Paris, she happened to be one day at the Abbaye aux Bois, where Madame Récamier lived, when the visit was announced of M. Sosthènes de la Rochefoucauld, a son of the Duke de Doudeauville. This amiable young man was known as having much taste for art, and during the Restoration was inspector-general of the theatres—certainly during a bright period, that of "La Muette" and "Guillaume Tell" at the Académie de Musique, and of "La Dame Blanche," "Fra Diavolo," and "Zampa" at the Opera Comique. But an incident had occurred in his early youth which was long remembered. In his enthusiasm at the period of the Restoration, he had helped to put the rope round the statue of the Emperor Napoleon in the Place Vendôme. He therefore became a marked man to all Bonapartists. While Madame Murat sat with Madame Récamier, the announcement of the visit of this gentleman made the latter lady offer to her visitor to deny herself to M. de la Rochefoucauld. "No," said Madame Murat, "the statue has been put up into its place again, and I forget what people pulled it down."

Madame Letitia Bonaparte, or Madame Mère, as she was called, and who usually resided in Rome, died about this period at an advanced age.

"The air of Paris had not deprived her of the faculty of strong will, which does not exist within a distance of forty leagues round Paris. The faculty of will ceases at Valence in Dauphiné.

Round Paris people are civilised, moderate, just, sometimes amiable. Energy appears to me to be the quality most antipathetic to those who have inhabited Paris for more than ten years. Fieschi was abominable: he was a man of the lower classes, but he had more force of will than the hundred and sixty peers who have so justly condemned him."

This appears to be one of the paradoxes of Beyle. In the matter of Fieschi and other great criminals, there is a total absence of the moral sense which the careful education and high culture of the upper classes certainly develops. Moreover, Beyle seems to have missed more than one cardinal point in such questions. In the North of Europe men are more successful in mastering their passions than in the South, where passion masters the man. In the North men obey the law; in the South they fear less the law than the master, be he Cæsar, be he a soldier, or be he a civil magistrate. In the North there are more struggles for a principle; in the South, for or against individuals. The Italian has brilliant artistic powers, but the bumps of secretiveness and destructiveness are prominent, and that of conscientiousness is generally low. To be the slave of a passion, of hatred, or vengeance, and to be a cool, calculating, inflexible master of one's acts, *i.e.*, to will strongly, are very different states of mind, and Beyle does not appear to have perceived this rather obvious distinction. Italian history, in the ages which Beyle cited as those of human energy, was the shuttlecock and battledore of tyranny and anarchy—of authority stained by violence, and of opposition stained by perfidious ingenuity of machination, rather than by a bold assertion of an elevated principle.

The Italian is a first-rate artist in intrigue, just as an Englishman frequently shows himself to be a first-rate mechanic in a bank burglary.

There are now and then, at this period, traces of the autobiographic work already alluded to. In March 1836, he writes to his favourite female correspondent at St Denis—

"Really I write too badly, because it is my pleasure to write for the printers. Writing as you see, I get through five and twenty pages in three or four hours, after which I am dead with fatigue. I have latterly written the 'Campaign of Russia' and the 'Court of Napoleon' with less talent and more frankness than Rousseau. I leave these confessions to a Swiss friend, who will sell them ten years after me, about the year 1856." (So he did not count living beyond 1846, when he would be sixty-three

years of age). "All the names are changed, and besides, who in 1856 will take interest in the memory of my protectors, who were then actors in the comedy of 1812. Perhaps no bookseller in 1856 will publish a book in which I avoid emphasis like the plague."

It certainly is much to be regretted that such a work as this has not seen the light. Where is this manuscript? Who was the Swiss friend with whom it was buried? Is this voice to remain mute and inglorious, forgotten on dusty shelves, in close-packed muniments? or has it perished irretrievably on the grocer's counter? More than one interesting autobiography has escaped this fate by the merest accident. M. Colomb states that he found in Beyle's papers an unfinished self-portraiture under the name of "Roizard," and that several parts of this composition, although idealised, appear to possess great truth.

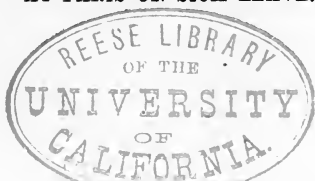
"A word sometimes affected him to tears; at other times he was ironical and hard, from the fear of being moved, and of being despised by himself as a man of weak character. His countenance was not handsome; his features were large, and subject to mobility; his eyes expressing the slightest shade of emotion, so as to mortify his own self-love. He was brilliant, amusing, and, full of unexpected sallies, he electrified his auditors, and excluded the possibility of a yawn from the people in the room in which he happened to be. But this vivacity of his sallies sometimes created aversion and enmity, and offended the dull and the mediocre. When he was without emotion he was flat, and disdained to call his powers of memory to his aid. A touching word, a true expression of misfortune heard in the street or in the shop of an artisan, affected him. But for pomp and affectation there was only irony to be expected from Roizard. From the age of sixteen, this man was in the sphere of the activity of Napoleon, and had followed him to Moscow and elsewhere. While he made these campaigns his father was ruined, and he himself was also ruined in 1814, by the fall of Napoleon. Roizard lived in Italy, and at the Revolution of 1830 he returned to official employment for the sole purpose of completing the thirty years requisite to enjoy a pension. He arrived at Rome without ambition, solely in order to pass ten years without ennui, and then to return to finish his life at Paris in a situation a little above poverty."

This projected work was, therefore, probably to be something like Goethe's "*Dichtung und Wahrheit*"—a real basis, with an

ideal superstructure. Had such a work been written, one might safely have predicted for it a success certainly surpassing that of his works of fiction. The reality would have kept within bounds that imagination which shows itself diseased in "*Le Rouge et le Noir*" and the "*Chartreuse de Parme*," and would have given full scope to that faculty of analysis with which he was so eminently gifted by nature, as well as that pleasant humour which never quitted him until disease had enfeebled a mental organisation so lively and mercurial.

Whether it was the fever or ennui, or those weaknesses of genius which are "to madness close allied," his mind was certainly rather miserable than happy, so that he expressed his surprise that his black humours were tolerated by his friends. "What a misfortune," writes he, "to be different from others ! Either I am dumb or ordinary, without grace, or I go to the devil, which inspires and carries me. I work firmly from mid-day to five or six o'clock when there is no post ; but in the evening I must be completely relieved from the ideas of the morning, for I cannot go to work next day without being disgusted if I have passed the previous evening at the same occupation. When I am fifty-six, I will return to Paris, and occupy a room on a fifth floor facing the south, even if I should have to make shoes."

It appears that in the beginning of 1836 Beyle had asked for the consulate of Carthage, and he mentions this as being a secret. His desire was not complied with, but he received a long leave of absence in order to recruit his health, and he arrived in Paris on the 24th May 1836.



## CHAPTER XXXIV.

836-37—Beyle Returns to Paris on Sick-Leave—Description of the Person and Habits of Beyle at this Period from Contemporary Testimony—Ducoin—Rochas—Charles Monselet—Arnould Frémy—Romain Colomb—Beyle's Severe Judgments on Ary Scheffer and Horace Vernet.

THE reader may imagine the joyful alacrity with which Beyle bade adieu, for a time at least, to the malaria and social vacuity of Civita Vecchia, and resumed his old Parisian habits—the promenade on the Boulevards, certainly the least dull one in Europe—the renewing acquaintance with the intellectual society of Paris—and the resort to his old haunts of the Café Anglais and the theatres. This sick-leave lasted three years, until June 1839, and was varied by hasty visits to London and the north of Spain, and by a long and thorough tour through the provinces of France, which was given to the world under the title of “Mémoires d'un Touriste.” When we add that this interval also saw the production of the “Chartreuse de Parme,” and of various minor tales, it will be seen that the suspension of his official functions was taken advantage of for great activity in literary production. Beyle should not have been a consul at all; it is a pity that a literary pension or a professorship of the fine arts did not enable him to remain in Paris altogether.

Shortly after his arrival, we find in his correspondence traces of his old feminine attachments, comprising a mixture of tender friendship and playful literary gallantry.

“MY FAIR FRIEND,—Will you be at the Rue St Marcel on Friday, Saturday, Sunday, and Monday. I wish to avoid a tiresome journey, if I cannot have an hour of amiable conversation. People are disquieted by the want of news from Constantine. I have heard that, under the Romans, Constantine was the capital of one Jugurtha, who gave them some trouble. A remarkable rascal, called Sallust, has written an amusing history of this Jugurtha. At Rome, people said that Sallust had as much wit as Voltaire. I count furiously on your lethargy to excuse

my giving you such old news. I will give you much better when you give me leave to adore you."

Beyle often thought of married life, and used to consult his friends on the subject, but nothing came of these tardy projects, and at his advanced age his personal appearance does not appear to have been very attractive to the other sex. M. Ducoin, in the posthumous *éloge* addressed to the Académie Delphinale, says, "The personal appearance of Beyle approached the frontiers of the grotesque, if it did not pass its boundary." Another compatriot of Beyle, M. Rochas, says, "Nature had grievously maltreated him. He was very ugly, and, what was worse, his ugliness was common and plebeian, without distinction, grace, or nobleness." Charles Monselet says that he was "a diplomatist with the face of a grocer." Arnould Frémy is more apologetic. He admits that he had a red face and a bullet body, but his eyes were diamonds from the fire of intelligence; and he asks, "Could such a face be ugly? Did not Socrates, with his odd, ungainly mask, incline those Greeks to ridicule who saw him for the first time?"

This reminds one of Wilkes, the ugliest of ugly men, who said that in pleasing the fair sex he was only half an hour behind the handsomest man in England. How often does a plain woman, by her manners and intellect, please a handsome man! Beyle, in his "*De l'Amour*," has some profound observations on the subject of beauty dethroned by love. Who, therefore, can doubt that Beyle, with his soul of fire and his knowledge of the feminine heart, more profound than that of a Jean Paul Richter, a Senancourt, or a Balzac, was capable of inspiring a strong passion in spite of that "grocer's face" and "bullet body" which friend and foe declared to be so grotesque and plebeian? The portraiture of him at this period by Colomb, the most intimate of his friends, appears to me to be so graphic, that I reproduce it for the perusal of the reader.

"He was middle-sized, and loaded with a corpulence which increased with age, his athletic form somewhat recalling that of the Farnese Hercules. He had a fine forehead, a lively and piercing eye, a sardonic mouth, a highly-coloured complexion, much expression of countenance, a short neck, broad and slightly-rounded shoulders, a projecting paunch, short legs, and a firm step. The best proportioned part of his body was his hand, and in order to attract attention to it, his nails were kept disproportionately long. At Rome, in 1834, M. Salley, executing the

statue of Mirabeau, asked leave to take Beyle's hands for his model, which flattered Beyle. This totality of physical appearance left much to be desired on the score of beauty and elegance ; and in spite of the illusions of self-love and drawing-room successes, Beyle was aware of his disadvantages, but he consoled himself by thinking that wit and naturalness cause ugliness to disappear when it is without deformity.

"Having preserved to a late period of life the pretension of being a man of gallantry, he professed an absolute submission to the laws of fashion. So different from other men in many things, he approached the vulgar in one thing—fashion. Nobody followed more blindly the thousand caprices of this foolish deity of the Parisians, and he put in requisition all the resources of art in order to correct the defects of nature and repair the ravages of time. At fifty, his coiffure was that of a young man ; he was bald, but, with an artificial scalp, he seemed to have an irreproachable head of hair. Big whiskers, forming a roll under his chin, were dyed dark-brown. With a cigar in his mouth, the hat slightly on the ear, and a cane in his hand, he mixed with the beaux of the Boulevard des Italiens. His susceptibility regarding every part of his costume was excessive, and he was seriously shocked by any observation on the cut of his coat or trousers. It seemed to him to be a satire on his physical appearance, on which he was so touchy."

This mixture of pot-belly and pink of fashion, this brawny Herculean frame and Adonis finger-nails, those enlarged features and rosy gills, with carefully dyed whiskers, do they not recall the *ci-devant jeune homme* of a Gymnase comedy-vaudeville, or a corpulent sexagenarian in a novel of Paul de Kock, who does not consider himself too late in life for a success in gallantry ? Such was the outward appearance of a man whose genius for acute observation, pungent satire, and social pleasantry gave him a place in the most gay, and, at the same time, most cynical society of modern Europe.

That Beyle enjoyed himself during this long leave of absence is not to be doubted. He was on half-pay, but he pleasantly repeats the observation of a Russian, "*À Paris l'esprit amusant est en raison inverse de l'argent possédé.*" After the dull days of Civita Vecchia, the seeing of old friends and the renewing acquaintance with art and literature caused him the most vivid enjoyment ; but his criticisms on the painters and pictures of the day were more severe than ever. Winterhalter's landscape in a

picture of the "Decameron" he compared to painting on a fan, and Ary Scheffer's "Christ" appeared to him to be a dull grey sketch by some pupil of Paul Veronese. He admired the ingenuity, courage, and perseverance with which the amiable Baron Taylor secured so many valuable Spanish pictures for Louis Philippe. "The Spaniards," said Beyle, "are admirable in painting a monk who is afraid of hell." But he found a want of *beau idéal* in the Spanish school, in which he was right. Velasquez is the prince of realists. At a subsequent exhibition, he returns to Ary Scheffer rather cynically, and considered his pictures ("qui font pâmer les belles dames du Faubourg St Germain") as a sort of reproduction of the Venetian school minus the colour, or, as he expresses it, a "a decoction of the pupils of Paul Veronese and Tintoretto." He found the "Marguerite" of "Faust" to be "a big German girl, with full body and fallen-in cheeks, a picture possessing naturalness, but without ideal. What captivates the fine ladies is the serious and worthy air that Scheffer gives to his figures." Every reader must agree with Beyle in conceding this last quality to Ary Scheffer, but it appears to us that he does often rise to the ideal. How is it possible to see the "St Augustine and Ste Monica," and think otherwise? Dull must be the soul not stirred and charmed by such a union of vitality and elevation of expression. Here is the touch of nature that makes all the world kin.

He found that Horace Vernet's large military pictures in Algeria were "nature seen by a man of great talent, but who feels nothing of what is noble; therefore the public, which is vulgar, admires the truth of those assaults in which the soldiers look like frightful frogs."

The fact is, that such pictures as those well-known ones of Horace Vernet were what one may call *many-figured pictures done to order*, like the battle-pieces of Vandermeulen, executed for Louis XIV., the ceremonial pictures of David, or a public dinner to that great British statesman the Earl of So-and-so, surrounded by county bigwigs and the corpulent corporation of Eatanswill. Such a picture, however large, bears the same relation to high art that a good report by a special correspondent in a newspaper has to a history, poem, or novel selected by the author himself. In artist's phraseology, such a many-figure picture is as much a "pot boiler" as a portrait. When an artist, freed from all trammels of court or other patronage, selects of his own accord a many-figured picture, then the critic may exercise his severity. A man



of genius, such as Mr Frith in his "Derby Day" or "Railway Station," may bring out the dramatic element with such power as to produce classical works, and compel the eulogy of the critic.

Beyle was not only soured at this period, but the Raphaels, Peruginos, and Domenichinos which he habitually saw at Rome were rather trying contrasts for a critic. Theophilé Gautier says of Horace Vernet, "He is eminently French and eminently modern." This is true. Horace Vernet's work is a window opened on the military life of France, comprising all the space between the First and the Second Empires of the House of Bonaparte.

## CHAPTER XXV.

1837-38 — Tour through France — Normandy — Brittany — Marseilles — Lyons Gastronomy — Bordeaux and its Wines — Tours and Béranger — Publishes the “Mémoires d'un Touriste.”

A CONSIDERABLE part of the years 1837 and 1838 were passed in a tour through the French provinces, which subsequently furnished the materials for one of the most interesting of his works, and gave him scope for much acute observation of French localities and varieties of provincial character; for although France has mainly one language, she is, like all large states, a *mixtum compositum* of divers peoples, some widely differing from each other.

Normandy he found to be the most pleasing in external aspect, from its woods, green pastures, and gentle undulations, while the Auvergne and the Pyrenees are more stern and wild. Altogether he preferred his own country, the valley of the Isère, to all others, from its picturesque blending of lofty mountains and rich lowland. The Garonne and the Rhone appeared to him much less attractive, and he considered the Loire “an ill-bred river,” from the great number of islands, which prevent its full breadth being seen. As for France, taken as a whole, he declares that “La Belle France” is as mendacious an epithet as “Merry England.” Beyle does not spare the little provincial vulgarities of his fellow-countrymen. At Vannes, in Brittany, Beyle supped at the *table d'hôte*, at which the guests were all occupied with the expenses of the bridge over the Vilaine, and they spoke with an air of great respect of the large sums this and that part of it would cost. The naming these sums was accompanied by a shrug of the shoulders and the significant projection of the lower lip, as much as to say, “To name sums so heavy makes me a person of importance.” At L'Orient Beyle dined at the Hôtel de France, in a hall with large mirrors recently brought from Paris, the price of which was constantly the topic of conversation.

But when Beyle falls in with a trait of real good manners, he

is not less ready to register it, in however humble a sphere it may be. Beyle was in a bookseller's reading-room, and being intent on a book, remained unconsciously more than an hour beyond the usual time of shutting the place. The bookseller, in order not to disturb the reader, waited without a murmur until the book was shut. "This," says Beyle, "I conceive to be an exquisite trait of politeness; the more so," he adds, "as the candle was burning, an important economical consideration in the provinces."

At Marseilles Beyle was equally candid in accusing himself of premeditated bad manners; he had been asked to dine, and accepted, when lo! he sees "*Semiramide*" on the playbills, and forthwith goes with a long face to his *amphitryon* and begs to be excused, declaring himself to have a splitting headache. Unfortunately the *amphitryon* also went to the opera, and saw Beyle. The *amphitryon* was vexed, and said to a mutual acquaintance next day, "Take care never to invite Beyle to dinner on an opera evening."

As in a tour through Germany there must be much of music and song, in Italy of painting and architecture, in Greece of azure skies, brigands, and bad fare, so in provincial France something of gastronomy is not inappropriate. According to Beyle, Lyons distinguishes itself in this respect. London may have the greatest variety of potatoes, but Lyons bears the palm for the various methods of preparing them. A friend of Beyle is declared to have serious claims on his gratitude for having presented him to a society that knew how to dine. These people dined by rotation at each other's houses, and had female, not male, cooks. These dinners were not disturbed by political or literary discussions, or pretensions to show wit and learning. The business of the meeting was gastronomy. If a dish was good, a religious silence was kept; if it was otherwise, there was no hesitation in criticising it in presence of the master of the house. In some cases the cook was summoned to hear the eulogies of the craft which she had displayed; and Beyle saw on one occasion a trollope of forty ("*grosse maritorne de quarante ans*") shed tears of gratitude and joy on hearing the warm praises bestowed on her dish of ducks and olives.

At Bordeaux Beyle appears to have been equally fortunate in his gastronomic studies. He writes from thence, as we find by his published correspondence, "For eight days I was persecuted by the rain; but I have found, instead of a serious friend who

renders one no services, a gay friend who procures me dinners with the pretty women of the place. I did not know what claret was until I came here. It is always mixed with a third of Hermitage before being sent to England or elsewhere. The true claret has an astonishing bouquet, and is less *corsé* than the wine we know."

Most readers may remember Paul Louis Courier's portrait of Talma in the yellow leaf, "ce gros amant de soixante, aus à voix rauque." Beyle hears during his tour of an odd specimen of the bluntness of Corvisart, the physician of Napoleon, on meeting this great actor, who had gone to Malmaison to take leave before going on a tour to the provinces. "Could you not," says Corvisart, "find some melodramatic actor who is black-haired and short-sighted, and bears some resemblance to the bad portraits of you on the Boulevards?" "And what should I do with him?" said Talma, astonished at such a question. "You could send him in your stead into the provinces," rejoined Corvisart; "he would have more success than you." But this odd speech pleased neither the real nor the mimic Emperor.

At a country-house in Burgundy Beyle found a volume of Balzac in his room. "How I admire this author!" says he. "what a painter of the mishaps and pettifogging littlenesses of provincial life! But I should prefer a simpler style. On the other hand, would the provincials admire and purchase novels written in a simple style?" Beyle supposed that Balzac passed his novels twice over; first simply and reasonably, and a second time with rhetorical decorations, such as "il neige dans mon cœur," and other neological finery.

At Tours Beyle had pointed out to him the modest habitation of Béranger, "the most honest man in France, and perhaps the greatest poet of the age." The shrine was worthy of the pilgrim; and he was about to knock at the door of the great ballad-writer, when the virtue named Discretion appeared before him with warning mien, and said, "If all the travellers who love and admire him are to intrude themselves on the privacy of the poet in his rural retreat, he might as well not have left the environs of Paris;" and Beyle, with heroic self-control, retraced his steps to the highway.

Beyle suffered much from gout during these tours. He writes from Strasburg on the 2d of July, "My travelling ardour has much diminished. The gout attacked me at Berne, and made me suffer acutely at Bâle, so as to lay me up. I wished

to see what remains of the famous "Dance of Death," the cathedral, and the admirable Holbeins. I made extraordinary efforts, followed by an abominable day in the diligence from Bâle to this place. I walked out, but it is quite impossible for me to ascend the celebrated spire. My face in the street, walking with the aid of a cane, and swearing when the left foot is hurt by some pointed pavement, must make the Strasburgers laugh ; but nobody knows me. I return to Paris with the greatest pleasure, and yet I am so near the sublime cathedral of Cologne, only two days and a little more from here by steamer. These clerks [of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs] aided by my imprudent nature, will end with sending me back to Civita Vecchia in poverty ; so I will never see Cologne, yet I love the beautiful. It is the foible to which I sacrifice, as you see, prudence and health ; and it is all the same for the Minister whether I spend my thirteen francs a day in the Rue Caumartin or at Cologne."

He had seen his physician, Dr Prevost, at Geneva, who had given him the advice to drink the Vichy waters and to apply leeches. In this same letter he says, "From the age of fifty-five to sixty-five corpulent men are tormented by their blood ; afterwards they are more at their ease, and life diminishes a twentieth every year."

From various expressions in this letter it would appear that there had been questions and criticisms in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs about the extraordinary duration of his leave of absence ; and the gay and pleasant "*Mémoires d'une Touriste*," which appeared at this time, do not convey the impression of a man who is very unfit for the performance of his duties in a climate more suitable for his constitution than Civita Vecchia ; but he managed to prolong his sick-leave for another twelvemonth.

One of Beyle's relatives, a gentleman of intelligence with a relish for pleasantries, told me that Louis Philippe remarked the length of his stay in Paris ; and seeing him one day, said, "Ah ! M. Beyle, je suis content que vous faites de si belles études, mais *le Roi* espère que vous n'oubliez pas que vous êtes consul de France !"

At length his celebrated novel "*La Chartreuse de Parme*" saw the light in 1839.

## CHAPTER XXXVI.

1838—Beyle Publishes the “Chartreuse de Parme”—It is most Favourably Reviewed by Balzac—Balzac’s Personal Relations with Beyle—Beyle’s warm Acknowledgments of Balzac’s Eulogies.

“LA CHARTREUSE DE PARME” is of all the novels of Beyle the one which has made the most noise ; and the extravagant eulogies of M. de Balzac have certainly given it an adventitious celebrity, in addition to those unequivocal qualities of genius which no one can deny to any work of Beyle, more especially to a book which analyses that Lombard society and that tender passion which he had studied so profoundly. It is, in fact, a novelistic continuation of the observations of the tourist who wrote “Rome, Naples, et Florence,” and of the philosopher who wrote “L’Amour.”

His painting of the Lago di Como has, allowing for difference of climate and locality, the truth, the beauty, and the brilliancy of Scott’s pictures of Highland and Lowland scenery such as we find in “Waverley,” “Rob Roy,” and the rest of the immortal series ; and Beyle deals with the violence and tenderness of the ruling passion in a manner that here and there recalls the mastery of a Rousseau and a George Sand. The story is too long for reproduction. It is a tale of North Italian political society in the years that intervened between 1815 and the revolutionary movements of 1821, which sent so many Italians into exile, and which caused Beyle’s own expulsion from Milan. A part of the action passes on the Lago di Como and in Milan ; and there is even a rather far-fetched account of the campaign of Waterloo. But the principal part of the action is at an imaginary court of Parma, where a Count Mosca is prime minister. This character is very finely and skilfully drawn—perhaps the ablest of all Beyle’s creations—showing the conflict between the natural feelings of the man and the official duties of the minister of one of those most unhappy Italian princes whom it was the fashion to call a “tyrant.” This class of persons, placed from their youth in a false position between the old traditions of Italian government and the new

culminating National and Liberal forces, lived in perpetual fear of the weapons of the assassin, while the worrying espionage exasperated all the educated classes of society.

"La Chartreuse de Parme" is eminently a book of political and historical information relative to the North of Italy after the restoration of the native princes and the lapse of French rule. It is true that there are bursts of admiration of Napoleon I. and of the French rule in Italy, which are somewhat illogical in a professor of ultra-liberalism. The philosopher should have seen that the Italians under Napoleon were perfectly and hopelessly gagged, and therefore they were good-humoured and resigned to their destiny. Under Austria they were also gagged, but imperfectly; for there was more of legal obstruction to the caprice of governors, and consequently a more cumbrous and embarrassed administration; and this, added to the inherent and indefeasible antipathy of the two races, produced ultimate disruption. It was an ill-omened union, bad for Italy, and almost fatal for Austria.

Outside the Austrian dominions in Italy, affairs were not better, but worse. The man who has painted with most admirable truth the black side of the Italian character is Machiavelli in his "Prince;" and the picture given by Beyle shows that the Italians were, two generations ago, in spite of the three centuries that had elapsed from the days of Machiavelli, fundamentally the same race of timid but yet astute rulers, doing acts of glaring injustice in order to reduce their enemies to impotence, and those enemies carrying on modes of opposition in which the most ingenious deception and the most reckless violence are often combined. In the southern half of Italy those moral defects were even greater than in the northern; but in our day a great change has taken place. A *tabula rasa* has been made of the map of Italy; and the races that have remained uppermost in the *mêlée* (the northern) have those moral qualities that certainly place them higher than the inhabitants of the southern half of the peninsula. The fortunate and successful Piedmontese are Italians in language, but certainly in character like the French Swiss, with much southern blood in their veins.

With regard to this work of Beyle, in the midst of many profound and refined observations, which must be recognised as such by all persons who have had opportunities of studying the Italians, the reader is ever and anon shocked by exaggerations and improbabilities that destroy all enjoyment or approach

to illusion, and an otherwise classical production is spoiled by the impossibilities and claptraps of inferior melodramatic novelists. There are hairbreadth escapes, as absurd as any in "Monte Christo," and complicated conspiracies, which succeed and fit in to a nicety, as they would do in a drama of the illustrious Joseph Bouchardy. There is also rather a want of easy and familiar humour in the painting of the inferior personages, a quality in which Beyle was by no means deficient, as he showed himself to have possessed in an eminent degree in that fragment of a novel called "Le Chasseur Vert."

Balzac had Beyle's defect of a want of perception of due proportion. He greatly surpasses Beyle in the accumulation of minute and felicitous detail, illustrating the thousand little egotisms and  *finesse*  of prosaic existence ; but measure and proportion are not to be looked for. Had Balzac been a landscape painter, his towers would have been cloud-capped and his palaces gorgeous. Hence his delight in the unreal and impossible world of Beyle, and his incapacity to be shocked by the most striking distortion and disproportion. If beauty be the harmonious agreement of parts with the whole, how superior the unity and congruity of Scott to the spotty and sporadic brilliancy of a Balzac and a Beyle !

It is always pleasant to praise a favourite author ; unfortunately, my opinion of this production falls not only short of the high estimate which M. Balzac formed of it in one of his most elaborate criticisms, but is below that generally accredited in France and Italy. It appears to me that Beyle was not a novelist by especial function and calling, but was rather a man possessed of large general powers, who could diverge into various paths of literature ; that is to say, like Dr Johnson, Benjamin Constant, or Sainte Beuve, a man whose express vocation was criticism and speculation, and, like the authors of "Rasselas," "Adolphe," and "~~La~~ Volupté," somewhat out of his own proper sphere in prose fiction ; at the same time incapable of any serious literary effort in which there should not be much to admire. As above stated, "La Chartreuse de Parme" is the novelistic continuation of "De l'Amour" and "Rome, Naples, et Florence," and also inferior to them, as it appears to me. This mistake of vehicle is not uncommon in men of genius. The novels of Jean Paul Richter keep a place in standard literature, not because they are clear and congruous pictures of human life, but from the possession of qualities distinct from the dramatic and descriptive



ones required in a novel—not only pervading quiet humour, but bright flashes of wit unsurpassed in European literature. But Charles Lamb's "Essays of Elia" are infinitely pleasanter reading than any of the novels of the celebrated Jean Paul, because the author has chosen a vehicle perfectly adapted to the peculiarities of his genius.\*

"La Chartreuse de Parme" was the most successful fiction of Beyle, and the most flattering of all the criticisms upon it was the one written by Balzac in the *Revue Parisienne*. Balzac was certainly most capable of appreciating Beyle's subtle analyses of human motive, as well as to pardon those many false notes that jar on the moral tympanum of the most indulgent; for Balzac himself, with all his genius, was a grievous sinner in this way.

In the course of this article Balzac divides the modern literature of France into that of ideas and of images. Among the men of ideas he puts Beyle, along with Alfred de Musset, Merimée, Leon, Gozlan, Béranger, Delavigne, Gustave Planche, Madame Girardin, Alphonse Karr, and Charles Nodier. To the literature of images belong the works of Victor Hugo, Lamartine, Chateaubriand, Alfred de Vigny, Théophile Gautier, and Sainte Beuve. According to Balzac, the literature of ideas, if less exalted and poetical, is more clear, practical, human, realist, and essentially French, than the other; and he finds that "La Chartreuse de Parme" is the modern masterpiece of the literature of ideas. This writer holds that there is a third category, the eclectic, which holds with both, Scott being the man who can please both those who delight in ideas and in images. (We should have imagined that Scott ought to be decidedly classified with the men of images.)

Those who are acquainted with the works of M. de Balzac are aware that he does nothing by halves, and that he is rather too fond of painting impossible extremes; and in this review of Beyle's novel the superlatives are not spared, but it must be admitted sometimes not without foundation. "Beyle has written the modern 'Italian Prince,' suggested by the 'Principe' of Machiavelli, and which Machiavelli would have written himself had he been in exile."

I cannot help thinking that, in addition to that habit which Balzac had of intoxicating himself with his pet ideas, that one

\* Bussièrès says, "Incidents imagined to realise theories, instead of incidents evolved naturally, produce the effect of mosaic, and not of painting. It is Montesquieu dramatised."

of the causes of his extravagant praise of this work was that at its appearance it was rather ignored and neglected by the Parisian critics. Balzac's vanity, inflated by the discovery of a novel and remarkable work, led to his giving it that super-eminent place which even the admirers of Beyle can scarcely admit as reasonable. Had Balzac's eulogies been more moderate, we should have agreed with him that it was a good action to render justice to a man whose genius was chiefly enjoyable by the privileged few, and in whom the transcendental ideas somewhat barred that immediate and passing popularity which the vulgar herd of showy writers attain without difficulty. Balzac could have said no more had he been eulogising Swift, Voltaire, Fielding, Sterne, or Jean Paul, than he has said of Beyle in this article.

But the article is, as a whole, delightful, but chiefly from a very graphic account of his personal relations with Beyle, although characterised by the peculiarities above noted, and reminding us that all Balzac's "eggs had two yokes."

"I met M. Beyle twice in society in the course of twelve years previous to meeting him on the Boulevard and complimenting him on the "*Chartreuse de Parme*," on each occasion his conversation corresponding with the idea which I had of his works. He tells anecdotes with the grace and wit of Charles Nodier and Latouche. He has even the seductive language of the latter, although his corpulence seems at first sight to be inconsistent with the refinement of ideas and elegance of manners. But he triumphs immediately, like Koreff, the friend of Hoffman. He has a fine forehead, a piercing eye; in short, he has the physiognomy of his conversation, which has the enigmatic turn and singularity which makes him call himself one day '*Cotonnet*' and the next '*Frederic*.' I have been told that he was the nephew of that hard-working man of business, Daru, one of the arms of Napoleon. Beyle having been a man employed by the Emperor, was dismissed in 1814. We owe to his going from Berlin to Milan the striking contrasts produced in his works by his impressions of the South compared with those of the North.

"M. Beyle is one of the superior men of our time; and it is difficult to explain how this excellent observer and profound diplomatist (!), who by his writings and his conversation has given so many proofs of the elevation of his ideas and the extent of his practical knowledge, should be only consul at Civita

Vecchia. M. Merimée knew Beyle at an early period, and somewhat resembles him, but he is more elegant and easy. The works of Beyle are numerous, and are remarkable for fine observation and the abundance of ideas. His work 'De l'Amour' is superior to that of M. de Senancourt, but is deficient in method. He has risked the word 'crystallisation' to explain the beginning of the feeling,—an expression which was laughed at, but adopted permanently on account of its profound suitableness. Beyle is a writer since 1817. His debut was Liberal; but I doubt whether this great calculator is caught by the *niaiserie* of the Government of the two Chambers." (!)

Beyle's recognition of this article was most warm; and although somewhat in anticipation of the regular course of this narrative, we give it now in connection with what we have above said of "La Chartreuse de Parme."

*"To Monsieur Honoré de Balzac, Paris.*

*"CIVITA VECCHIA, 30th October 1840.*

"Yesterday I had a great surprise. I believe that never was an author so well treated in a review, and by a competent judge of the matter. You have had compassion on an orphan abandoned in the middle of the street. Nothing could be more easy for me than to write you a polite letter, as both of us can do, but as your proceeding with me has been unique, I wish to imitate you with a sincere answer. Receive my thanks for your advice more than for your praises. I read the review last night, and this morning reduced to four or five pages the fifty-four first pages. I had the most lively pleasure in writing these pages, that spoke of things that I adore, and never thought of the art of making a romance. I imagined that I should not be read before 1880. Some literary scavenger, thought I, will make the discovery of the works of which you so exaggerate the merit. I avow that I have been scandalised, I who am, nevertheless, sufficiently well disposed towards the author. The fifty-four first pages appear to me a graceful introduction. I thought of the prosy first half volumes of Walter Scott, and the long preamble of the divine Princess of Cleves. To draw out a plot freezes me; I write twenty-five or thirty pages, but in the evening I must have amusement. Unfortunately nothing here generates thought, and there is no amusement in living with the five thousand trading people of Civita Vecchia. Nothing is poetical here except

the twelve hundred convicts, whose society I cannot enjoy. The women here have one thought—to get a Paris bonnet from their husbands.

“I abhor the neatly turned style; many pages of the ‘*Chartreuse*’ were printed as they were dictated. There were sixty or seventy dictations; I was pressed by my ideas. If M. Villemain, the most distinguished of Academicians, translated the ‘*Chartreuse*’ into French, he would need three volumes to express what is given in two. Most rascals are emphatic, eloquent, and declamatory. I once almost had a duel about the ‘*cime indéterminée des forêts*’ of Chateaubriand. I cannot bear M. de Maistre, and my contempt for Laharpe goes the length of hatred. My Homers are the memoirs of Marshal Gouvion, St Cyr, Montesquieu, and the ‘*Dialogues of the Dead*’ of Fénelon. I often read ‘*Ariosto*,’ whose narrations I love.

“I see the future history of French letters in the history of painting. We are now at the pupils of Pietro da Cortona, who worked quick and with exaggerated expression. The style of M. de Chateaubriand and of M. Villemain seems to be many agreeable little things, but useless (like the style of Ausonius and Claudian), and many little fallacies agreeable to hear. Form is becoming of less consequence every day; a history of France written with the good sense of Hume would be read even in patois. The ‘*Chartreuse*’ is written like the Civil Code, and I will correct its style since it offends you; but it will pain me, as I do not admire the style in fashion. It makes me lose patience, and reminds me of Claudian, Seneca, and Ausonius.

“I have not copied M. de Metternich [as Balzac supposed, in Mosca of the “*Chartreuse*”], whom I have not seen since 1810 at St Cloud, when he wore a bracelet of the hair of C. M., who was then so beautiful. You have felt, with the tact of a man of action, that the ‘*Chartreuse*’ was not applicable to a great state. I therefore was led to choose an extinct dynasty, that of the Farnese. I read your article with laughter every time I came to praise that was rather strong. I thought of the faces of my friends in reading it,” &c., &c.,

“HENRI BEYLE.”

Indeed, he was highly flattered, and Colomb says, that in spite of all Beyle’s efforts to persuade him that he had received such eulogies with calmness, he (Colomb) perceived that they had turned his brain. Poor man! he had need of something to give him comfort and consolation, for his mortal career was

drawing rapidly to a close, with a state of health that left no doubt as to the proximate issue.

The "Mémoires d'une Touriste" had been rather coolly received by Paris criticism. M. Francis Wey, in the *Presse* (10th July 1838), had judged it severely, and found it unworthy of the author of "Rome, Naples, et Florence." The *Gazette de France* was equally severe; the *Temps* a shade more favourable. This generally cool reception of his previous work greatly enhanced to Beyle the value of the recognition of the "Chartreuse de Parme."

With the publication of the "Chartreuse de Parme," the career of Beyle may be said to have really terminated. It is true that he had another novel on the stocks, "Le Chasseur Vert," which, as far as it goes, is superior to anything else that he had done in the way of a novel, but it never got beyond a half volume. The manuscript appears to have been begun in 1833 and 1834, and corrected in 1836; but the continuation of the commencement was in so embryonic a state, that M. Colomb, his literary executor, declared that it could not be reproduced. Beyle had successively given the four following titles to this work: "Leuwen," "L'Orange de Malte," "Le Bois de Prémol," and "Le Chasseur Vert." In this novel we find a writer who is at ease in his work; there is no cudgelling of the brains to make effect, consequently it is more congruous, harmonious, and agreeable than either "La Chartreuse de Parme" or "Le Rouge et le Noir."

## CHAPTER XXXVII.

1839—Beyle returns to Civita Vecchia—The Duke de Bordeaux in Rome—Beyle Exasperated by the Egyptian Question of 1840—Has an Apoplectic Fit in 1841—Beyle becomes an Invalid—Goes to Rome for Medical Treatment—Returns to Paris—His Death and Burial.

IN March 1839, Count Molé, after several sharp parliamentary encounters, resigned the office of Prime Minister, and Minister for Foreign Affairs, and his protector being no longer in power, Beyle made up his mind to return to Civita Vecchia, after nearly three years' absence, not only to the ennui which he dreaded, but to positive ill-health, which prevented him from recommencing his habitual life between Civita Vecchia and Rome. Coin and medal hunting appear to have been his last occupation in Italy. As a dilettante of art he writes to a lady at Madrid—

“I have found bronze medals of Augustus, Tiberius, and Nero. The twelve or fifteen first emperors had a hundred and twenty million of subjects. Augustus was the most refined rascal; Tiberius, half mad with melancholy, was a great prince; Trajan was the only man to be compared to Napoleon after Cæsar. Look at their portraits, if your eyes and that of Mademoiselle Paquita are not spoilt by lithographs and keepsakes. The portraits of the Roman emperors are generally masterpieces of design.”

The presence of the Duke de Bordeaux this year rendered Beyle less free in his movements; he was afraid that, if this prince came to Civita Vecchia, and he was not at his post, that there might be reflections from the French Foreign Office, which he styles “stones thrown foolishly at my head by the clerks.” At this time, when the Duke de Bordeaux was so sharply looked after by the servants of Louis Philippe, nobody dreamt of the possibility of a Bonapartist restoration; and Beyle, not only from a remainder of early inclination, but from not having any official scruples, appears to have been in relations of courtesy with the daughter of Lucien Bonaparte, to whom he used to

send reviews and journals. He also gives his friends in Paris the gossip of Rome relative to two dowager-queens whom he met in society—Queen Christina, the widow of Ferdinand VII., and another Spanish princess, the widow of King Francis of Naples.

There now occurred a political incident which made a most painful impression on Beyle as a national Frenchman—the signature of the treaty of the 15th July 1840, and the exclusion of France from the comital action of Europe, in consequence of the policy of M. Thiers on the Egyptian question. Colomb mentions that, in presence of his own clerks at Civita Vecchia, he considered France dishonoured. Having so fully treated this political question in my “History of the Egyptian Revolution,” I do not find it advisable to say anything more on the subject. France has forgotten 1840 through trials a thousandfold more terrible ; and M. Thiers has, in a vigorous old age, shown himself to be one of the greatest parliamentary leaders, in a restorative sense, that modern European history has adduced to the admiration of the civilised world.

Beyle was not long cast down, for two months later there appeared in the *Revue Parisienne* that criticism of the “*Chartreuse de Parma*” by Balzac, which we have already noticed in connection with our account of this novel, so that a bright gleam of sunshine illumined the evening of his life ; but the night was close at hand, and Beyle himself had the full consciousness of it.

On the 15th of March in the following year, 1841, Beyle had the first attack of the malady to which he succumbed. He had had incessant headaches for six months, and then, all on a sudden, he could not recollect the most common words of French, such as even “Give me a glass of water.” He had the self-observant power to perceive that in other respects the animal was as usual, and then, after a fit of eight or ten minutes, memory returned, leaving only a great lassitude. This occurred four times. Beyle did not believe much in medicine, and consulting a Berlin homœopathist then in Rome, found that he was threatened with nervous apoplexy. A Roman doctor, a man “with a malignant, intelligent countenance, and charlatanesque manner,” proposed aconite and sulphur ; but Beyle does not seem to have had any confidence in him, and considered his doom as sealed, contenting himself with the reflection that he no longer suffered from gravel. Another doctor told him it was the gout, which, not

going to the extremities, went to the head. At a subsequent stage he was four or five times a day on the point of suffocation ; but his dinner did him good, and he slept well, but often, as he says, with a presentiment that he would never awake. He was not afraid of death, but found the passage disagreeable. "*Je me suis colleté avec le néant,*" he writes on the 5th of April,—a striking expression. In spite of religion and philosophy, the idea of the cessation of habitual existence rarely fails to appal, except in old age, when resignation is normal.

Beyle at this period occupied a pretty room on the second floor of the Via Condotti, one of the most frequented streets of Rome. He was attended by a stout wench called Barbara, who robbed and cheated him, but this lodging in Rome he considered better than a country inn to die in. The stutter in his speech was considered by him the worst symptom. His most constant friend in this illness seems to have been M. Constantin, the cameo-engraver. Beyle had two little dogs, which he said he loved tenderly : one a black spaniel, of English breed, handsome, but of a melancholy temperament ; the other, "*Lupetto,*" like a little wolf, of fawn colour, "*gay and lively, like a young Burgundian.*"

In the autumn he asked and obtained sick-leave, and went first to Florence, where the Grand Duke was hospitably entertaining the congress of Italian men of science. Beyle notices the large dinners and the small amount of science got through. He found everything too dear, and remarked his own stinginess as a sign of increasing age.

Beyle's last arrival in Paris was on the 8th of November, and his friends at once remarked the great change that had taken place in him. His speech, usually so lively, now dragged its slow length along. His character was mollified, and had lost all spirit of asperity and contradiction. He was more careful in the little duties of society, more communicative, and more affectionate ; the soldier of the battle of life was disabled, and would fight no more. For a time Beyle kept to the regimen and the system prescribed for him ; but his impatience appears to have at last got the better of him, and he resumed literary composition and dictation to an amanuensis. This seems to have determined congestion of the brain. On the 22d of March he dined with M. Champollion, brother of the Egyptologist. Probably it was an imprudence for a man in his state of health to expose himself to even the most moderate excitement of hospitality and



the mental gymnastic of interesting conversation. The result was, that on the pavement of the Rue Neuve des Capucines, opposite the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, he had an attack of apoplexy.

He was carried into a shop, where he was found senseless by M. Colomb, who had been sent for. This attack took place at seven in the evening, and he was then carried to his lodgings in the Rue Neuve des Petits Champs, where he died on the following morning, without pain, and without speaking a word. The oddity and eccentricity that characterised everything connected with Beyle terminated only with his life. He was buried at the cemetery of Montmartre, and by his will the following inscription is on the small monument that marks his last resting-place :—

## ARRIGO BEYLE

MILANESE

SCRISSE

AMO

VISSE

ANN LIX

MORI IL XXIII MARZO

MDCCCLII

The cause of this epitaph, so unaccountable in the case of a man born and bred in France, bearing a name which has no resemblance to an Italian one, and, moreover, a salaried servant of the state both during the First Empire and the reign of Louis Philippe, was his disappointment at the failure of the rather unaccountably adventurous policy of M. Thiers in 1840 relative to the Egyptian question, already alluded to in its place. Beyle did not quarrel with his bread and butter, by resignation of his consulship, but mentally abdicated his quality of French citizen, and, in consideration of the affection which he bore to Milan, he styled himself on his tombstone a Milanese. Many French friends were scandalised at this piece of eccentricity, but the instructions to the executor, M. Colomb, were positive, and the inscription was made in accordance with the will of Beyle.

## CHAPTER XXXVIII.

## The Wills of Beyle—Posthumous Anecdotes.

OMITTING earlier and obsolete testamentary dispositions, I now propose to say something in fuller detail of the proved wills of Beyle, of which I received copies when in Grenoble.

In that dated Rome, 28th May 1834, he leaves everything in the apartments he may occupy at the time of his decease to M. Abraham Constantin of Geneva, historical painter, then residing in Rome; and he begs this M. Constantin to send his bust of Tiberius to Count Molé, Rue Ville l'Evêque, Paris, if he judges proper to do so. Beyle adds, "I die in the bosom of the Reformed Church, and wish to be buried beside M. Schelley (Shelley), the Englishman, near the pyramid of Cestius, in Rome."

By the will of Paris, 27th September 1837, Beyle makes his sister Pauline heiress-general, and if she predeceases him, the youngest daughter of his sister Caroline, Madame Mallein, is made heiress. His books and manuscripts are left to M. Louis Crozet, engineer in Grenoble. His furniture, books, watch, and what was due of his salary, are left to Romain Colomb, who was to be his testamentary executor, and who was to bury him at the cemetery of Andilly, in the valley of Montmorency; and if that should be too expensive, at the cemetery of Montmartre. On the tomb he was to place a plain marble slab, with these words, and no others (here follows the inscription as already given). Nothing was to be added or changed in this inscription. He then asks M. Colomb to give some volumes of his books to each of his friends, and to keep the bust of Tiberius, unless M. Molé should wish to keep it.

The last will is on the 28th September 1840, and is headed "Will of Marie Henri Beyle, Consul of France at Civita Vecchia." In this will he leaves his effects that may be in the States of the Pope to M. Bucci Donato, of Civita Vecchia, for

sale, one-fourth of the produce to be kept by him, and three-fourths to go to his sister Pauline, widow of Perier-Lagrange, then living in the house of M. Colomb, No. 35 Rue Godot de Mauroy, Paris. Similar instructions as to the tombstone as in the former will are given. His copy of Michaud's "Biographie Universelle," of fifty-two or fifty-four volumes, is left to M. Blazis, advocate, of Civita Vecchia.

All the wills are endorsed by the tribunal of first instance of the Department of the Seine, and also by the family notary, M. Yver, in May and June 1842, the year of Beyle's decease.

A posthumous anecdote of Beyle reminds us that no man is a prophet in his own country. In the year 1861 Madame Crozet, the widow of the engineer the friend of Beyle, who had been mayor of Grenoble, presented thirty-one volumes of manuscripts of Beyle to the public library of that city; but at that period there appears to have been a mayor of Grenoble who, unlike M. Crozet, was the reverse of an appreciator of high literature. Subsequently M. Gariel, the conservator of the library, asked in the *Courier de l'Isère* on two occasions how it was that, in the new denomination of streets, there was none named "Beyle" or "Stendahl." "It is true," adds he, "that Beyle was not very amiable towards his fellow-townsmen. But ought we not to be more generous than he was?" In the announcement of the acquisition of the manuscripts, M. Gariel adds, "Beyle is without doubt the first literary name of Grenoble. The house in which he was born is not even marked by the marble slab usually consecrated to the other illustrious of Grenoble. To draw the attention of the municipality to this forgetfulness, the bare mention of the circumstance is no doubt sufficient."

On this the mayor of the day called the conservator to task in the following strain—

"You write in the newspapers, you meddle with matters that concern only the administration; what have you to do with proposing names of streets?"

"Your predecessor," said the conservator, "approved my suggesting the name of Marshal Villars for a street."

"Nothing to do with Villars—we are now about Beyle. One would suppose, according to you, that Beyle was"—

"One of those men of letters who have gained reputation for Grenoble. I can produce in five minutes a dozen of appreciations of his genius."

"Mere newspaper writers."

"Who all agree in regarding Beyle as an original genius, and a man of superior intelligence."

"You call him a man of superior intelligence," said the sapient mayor; "*allons donc!* I dined twice in his company, and know better."

Having slightly alluded to Beyle's relations to Napoleon I. and Louis Philippe, we hope the reader will not think us spinning out too much in adding an anecdote of the Second Empire in relation to the subject of this biography.

When the unfortunate Empress Eugénie visited Grenoble, she passed an hour in examining the library and museum. When about to retire, she perceived the portrait of Beyle, and remained to examine it. "We are behind time," said the Emperor; but the Empress, fascinated by the portrait, remained, and said, "How like him! I knew him well. When I was a child he frequented the drawing-room of my mother; he has made me dance on his knee; he is an author that I greatly admire. But how is he among the Dauphinois?"

"Madame, he was born at Grenoble."

"I congratulate you on your compatriot;" on which she spoke of several of his works, while the Emperor, who was said to be unsurpassed in knowledge of military literature, was examining the portraits of Lesdiguières and of Marshal Tallard, whose sad fate in the field he no doubt then little thought would be his own, a few years later, in the country of Turenne.

## PART THE SECOND.

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A CRITICAL EXAMINATION OF SEVERAL OF THE PRINCIPAL  
WORKS OF HENRY BEYLE, AND AN ANALYSIS OF HIS  
LEADING THEORIES ON ART, LITERATURE, AND MODERN  
SOCIETY.

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*"Lives of Haydn, Mozart, and Metastasio."*

THE operatic era in which Beyle wrote this work was a very different one from that of our days. *Now* we are in a period when the Bellinian idea, beautiful in its origin, has been fully used up by the talented Donizetti and the more sombre Verdi. The extension which the ingenious Scribe has given to the dramatic canvas has been complemented by those great historical gallery pictures in which Meyerbeer, during his career, showed himself such a master. The man of the day is certainly Richard Wagner; but rather by literary and mechanical, than by purely musical qualities; rather by critical acumen and an exciting orchestral sonority, that exaggerates the thrilling plenitude of enjoyment which had been extracted from the wind instruments by the Beethovens, the Cherubinis, and the Webers; rather by efforts to attain a realistic dramatic indication (that goes beyond the limits of music), than by that divine poetry of sound which had been revealed to a Handel, a Mozart, and a Rossini.

When we go back to the year 1814, we find the respectable Ferdinand Paer and the somewhat soporific Simon Mayer to occupy the Italian stage, while Cimarosa and Paisiello were the recognised and established stage classics of the popular order, the great Rossinian gush of spontaneity was beginning, but had not yet been felt in its power. Most of the greatest works of Beethoven had been already given to the world, but they were not familiar to the European public beyond certain German capitals; and it took modern society a good generation more to

give a due estimate to works so abounding in original ideas, so charming by dreamy, tender reveries, or astonishing by strokes of power, and so satisfying by complete development and a technical finish full of reliefs, varieties, and contrasts. We may therefore say that the close of the great French war was perhaps the epoch when the genius of Haydn and Mozart exercised the greatest and most undivided spell upon the taste and musical sensibility of Europe. Whatever defects Beyle's book may have, it was most undoubtedly well timed.

It is impossible for any one to be ever so slightly acquainted with the works of Mozart, and not perceive that their dominant quality (like that of Bellini, an exquisite master of much narrower range and much inferior in the technical part of the art) was tender feeling and a poetic melancholy, which even in his comic operas recurred ever and anon, to remind us that the burlesque was episodic, not dominant, in the creations of the composer. It was not so with the "Apollonic fire" of Haydn, whose compositions were a contrast to those of the younger, and, we must say, with all respect for the memory of Haydn, the greater master. Beyle writes—

"It seems to me that the magic of the style of Haydn is in a ruling character of liberty and joyousness, which is ingenious, natural, pure, and indomitable. In the works in which the composer wishes to inspire melancholy, this obstinate joyousness, not daring to show itself with an open countenance, transforms itself into force and energy. This is why Haydn was unable to excel in dramatic music. Without melancholy there is no passion. This is the reason why the French people, lively, gay, vain, and prompt, but not melancholy, will never have a great native school of dramatic music."

Beyle's theory is, that the gaiety of France is characterised by wit, intelligence, and refinement of observation. It is that of *Le Sage*, and, we may add, of *Voltaire*, and of *Henry Beyle* himself. The dominant characteristic of the Italian is sensibility, and hence the number of truly great artists that Italy has produced. What annoys the Frenchman is often not so much a real misfortune as some rebuff which his vanity has received, and the perpetual nourishment of this vanity is a far more imperious necessity in France than it is in the sombre and silent countries of the South of Europe, such as in acutely-feeling Italy, and also more so than in certain countries of the North, such as reserved England, testy Scotland, or good-natured Central and Southern Germany.

There is something of the burges drollery of Paul de Kock in the sketch which Beyle gives of the collision of loquacious vanities in a Paris coffeehouse. "At the Café de Foy, frequented by small and needy citizens, vanity is the basis of the conversation. Each person relates in his turn something flattering that has happened to himself. The auditor, who is supposed to listen, waits with ill-disguised impatience his own turn to speak, and immediately begins to relate a similar story in relation to himself, and without any answer to what his companion had previously addressed to him."

There is nothing new or original in the details which Beyle gives of the career of Haydn. He addresses himself to the well-known "Haydine" of Joseph Carpani for the well-known story of Haydn's career; his retired and solitary mode of existence, eating the bread of patronage, living in the age of dedications, and not of a securely remunerating public. Haydn's visit to London was the triumph of his life, for here he lived not on private patronage, but on a remunerating public. His solitary *bon mot* is given on seeing the portait of Mrs Billington by Reynolds, who had painted her as St Cecilia listening to angels. "You should rather have painted the enraptured angels listening to her," said Haydn.

Beyle gives a picturesque description of Haydn at the close of his life.

"In the Mariahilf suburb of Vienna, and bordering on the park of Schönbrunn, a grass-grown street is visible, in which is a humble lodging surrounded by silence. I knock at the door of Haydn, and after mounting a little wooden staircase, I find a quiet old man seated at a writing-desk; a smile appears on his countenance, and with an animated expression he speaks of his youthful years. You believe that the artist still exists, but soon he falls into lethargy and melancholy. The Haydn, full of fire and fecundity, who created musical marvels, and transported the auditors with delicious sensations, no longer exists. The butterfly, with brilliant wings, has disappeared, and has left us only the gross larva under which he appears to our eyes. I go from time to time to visit those remains of the great man, and to stir those embers once warm with Apollonic fire; and if I discover a spark not yet extinct, I leave him with melancholy emotion, thinking 'This is all that remains of one of the greatest geniuses that ever existed.'"

One of Beyle's anticipations has not been justified. He writes,

"Cimarosa, Haydn, and Mozart have quitted the world's stage. Their immortal works are still given ; other musicians will take their place, and we will fall into the shades of mediocrity."

That the eighteenth century was a golden age of music can be denied by none : Handel, with his huge cycle of immortal works ; the more learned, but less genial, Sebastian Bach ; Gluck, the creator of the lyric drama in almost its modern form ; Mozart, whose sympathetic genius invested with incomparable grace the forms of his more austere predecessors ; and Haydn, the creator of the modern orchestra. On the other hand, all the greatest works of Beethoven belong to the nineteenth century. Beethoven said himself, "I willingly annul all the music I have written before the midnight clock struck 1800." But Beyle does not appear to have known Beethoven, at least to the point of vivid enjoyment, and had not got over that which was considered in those days the strangeness and novelty of Beethoven's inflections, rhythms, and transitions. Before Beethoven died, Rossini and Weber divided the admiration of the musical world ; and within little more than four years after Beethoven's death, "*La Muette de Portici*," "*Fra Diavolo*," "*Guillaume Tell*," "*Robert le Diable*," and "*Norma*," were given to the world, so that it could not be said that the shades of mediocrity supervened at the period mentioned by Beyle.

As Giorgioni, Paul Veronese, and Rembrandt were great and original creators in colour, so as to have influenced the whole of their art, so Haydn has his distinct place in musical history as one of those men who gave an indisputable advance to all music by his being the true creator of the modern orchestra, and through it he pushed forward the whole line of the art. If the inspiration of Mozart was heaven-born, if the form of his operas was from Gluck, the mechanical basis had been revealed to him through the modern orchestra created by the genius and the indefatigable perseverance of Haydn. Beyle might have shown this a little more clearly than he has done ;\* but, taking it all

\* Although Haydn was the founder of modern instrumentation, yet all founders have predecessors, whom the public is rather too apt to forget. Such a predecessor was Philip Emanuel Bach, one of the sons of the great Sebastian. Haydn said of him, with his habitual modesty, "I owe him the best things that I have done." Mr Edward Hanslick has cleared up this point, with his accustomed good sense and thorough special knowledge, in the second volume of his "*Conzert-Saal*." Philip Emanuel Bach resided chiefly at Hamburg, and certainly Hamburg art might furnish a volume of interesting reminiscences of Lessing, Klopstock, Voss, the



together, his debut in literature was a book of pleasant reading, containing some of the germs of ideas which were subsequently more fully developed in his other productions. Details are barefacedly pirated from Joseph Carpani, but the generalisations of Beyle, writing under the name of "Alexandre César Bombet," are the pleasant beginnings of one of the most original and successful writers of this century.\*

The "Life of Mozart" is, like that of Hadyn, the writing of a man of natural taste and sagacity. If Beyle had not the courage to persevere in familiarising himself with the then strange rhythms and transitions of Beethoven, he, on the other hand, felt Mozart and adored him; and in many places the refined and ingenious expression of this Mozart-worship must serve the reader occasionally instead of the more laborious production of some hodman of musical literature.

The scientific knowledge of a Jahn and the dilettante discernment of an Oulibechieff are not to be found in Beyle's "Life of Mozart," but the anecdotal side of the biography is piquantly treated. "A painter wishing to flatter Cimarosa said to him one day, that he looked on him as superior to Mozart. Cimarosa replied, 'What would you say of a man who assured you that you were superior to Raphael?'"

The master whom Mozart most admired was Handel. "He understood effect better than any of us; when he wills it, he can strike as with a thunderbolt," said Mozart.†

In one respect Mozart had a fatal resemblance to Raphael. Like Byron, neither of them lived beyond thirty-seven years of age. There can be little doubt that the vital energies of Mozart were used up by the constant strain on the nervous system in composition, for which he had so great aptitude, and even passion, which he indulged to excess, and with too much disregard of the physical basis. Beyle quotes the well-known axiom of Cabanis, that sensibility acts like a fluid of which the total quantity is determined, and that whenever it is poured in greater abundance

Rombergs, Schroeders, Charlotta Akermann, and many others, including Henrich Heine, who was a Hamburger, and the wittiest of the series; indeed, rather a contradiction of Beyle's own theory, that four Hamburgers must club their brains together to make out the salt of a French *bon mot*.

\* See Appendix for a short notice of the career of Carpani, and of his "Haydine" and "Rossiniane."

† Mozart was the favourite master of Rossini. The latter presented to a friend of mine a portrait of Mozart on which he had written, "Voici le portrait du Maître des Maîtres."

into one of its canals, it is diminished in others. Beyle, whose sketch is as much a study of the man as of the musician, describes in detail Mozart's physical appearance and habits, his weakly-proportioned frame, his feeble general health, his pale and thin aspect, and a nervous mobility of the muscles of the face remarked in persons who are not of robust frame or strong mind. The fluid of sensibility was of the most exquisite quality (if such an expression can be permitted of an imponderable), but the structure of material fibre and tissue of which it was circumambient was of inferior durability.

It is not uncommon to see literary men, musical composers, and other artists, work under an artificial excitement produced by wine, tea, coffee, tobacco, and even opium. This is certainly burning the candle at both ends, and sure to end in disaster. Active production by a man of exquisite artistic powers is enough to use up the supply of sensation without encroaching on the capital stock by having recourse to artificial excitements. Alfred de Musset, Coleridge, Thomas Campbell, Charles Lamb and many others, will at once be remembered by the reader as having injured their health and diminished their productive powers by artificial excitements.

It was in his compositions that Mozart used up his stock of sensation, to the delight no doubt of the civilised world, but to the premature destruction of the feeble tenement in which the sacred fire of genius burned with a flame so bright and vivid.

"Music was the occupation of his life ; even in his most tender infancy no effort was required to put him to the piano. On the contrary, he had to be watched lest he should injure his health ; he would continue all night at the piano if not removed by the affectionate care of his relatives."

I will not follow Beyle in his criticisms of the operas of so well-known a composer. Of the scene in "Don Juan" in which the invitation is given to the statue, Beyle says, "He triumphs in the terrible accompaniment of the answer of the statue—an accompaniment free from all false grandeur and bombast. It is for the ear a *terrible* of the Shakespearian sort." We agree with Beyle ; it reminds one of Tasso's "*Rauco suon della Tartarea tromba.*"

Strange to say, Beyle says little of one of the greatest (many think the greatest) of all Mozart's works, the "Magic Flute." Either Beyle had not heard it or known it well, otherwise there must have been expressions of admiration as enthusiastic as

those of the “Don Juan” criticism. This opera, although enthroned as a classic in Germany, failed in Milan after the Peace, and even brought the management of the Scala to bankruptcy. The melodies of the “Magic Flute” are not of so popular a cast as those of “Don Juan,” and therefore it is still almost unknown in Italy, and I believe only recently really well known to the public of Paris and London (at the Theatre Lyrique the representations have been very frequent during several years); but to old residents in Germany it is no novelty. The libretto will not compare with that of “Don Juan” in clearness, popularity, concision and dramatic effect; and the comic parts (Papageno and Papagena) must be set down as a failure of the author, Schikaneder. But it is not a dull and stupid libretto, as London and Paris critics would make us believe. On the contrary, an elevated and poetical feeling pervades the whole composition; and although it is not a Christian legend in form, it is Christian in essence, and has interesting reminiscences of the fraternal and philanthropic benevolence of the illuminati of last century. Goethe thought so highly of the ideal aims of the libretto, that he projected making a continuation of it himself. As for the music, it is Mozart in all the magnificence of his genius, both as an inspired creator and as a consummate master of the mechanical resources of the art. Beethoven had the warmest admiration of it, and always maintained that it was Mozart’s masterpiece. Still, as far as my observation goes, I have found many learned German musicians to admit that there was fully as much genius in “Don Juan.”

One word more. If a contemporary of Raphael d’Urbino had written the Lives of his immediate predecessors without the smallest allusion to the career of the author of the “Transfiguration,” should we not have found it strange? And yet Beyle, writing the Lives of Haydn and Mozart at a time when Beethoven had reached the maximum of his power, scarcely alludes to him. Surely Beethoven had the popular and the sympathetic qualities as well as those that can be understood only by ears practised in the audition of musician’s music; and in the subsequent Life of Rossini there is more than one passage the reverse of flattering to Beethoven. Beyle, alas! did not know that the tenderness of Beethoven is a poem of endless beauty and variety on the “Pleasures of Melancholy.” Those soft and fluty winds of night, that carry to the distant ear the low moan of the childless mother and the motherless child, the plaintive resignation of

unrequited love, or those accents that border on hope and despair, seem to pervade those immortal "songs without words" which Beethoven published in his busy career. And then what art! what dissimilar rhythms, the product of a rich imagination, in close juxtaposition in the same composition, but fused into perfect unity by the power of a magician in the realms of sound!

Beyle could feel and appreciate the element of delicacy in the relations of human soul to human soul, but the finer secrets of music were beyond him. He knew the stage repertory of modern Italy; he did not know the music of the land of Hadyn and Mozart. He was capable of an interesting monograph on these men, but not of a study that could satisfy a musically organised reader.

Beyle's "Life of Metastasio" need not detain us long. Unlike those poets who had to rough it through fierce factions and tempestuous times, Metastasio in his life fell on pleasant places. He had not the robust power of some of his predecessors, but he lived in a frequently pacific and always voluptuous age; and besides possessing a tender genius, he had the prudence to take full advantage of the favours of fortune. Thoroughly non-political and non-militant, he made no enemies; his social relations were as mellifluous as his verse.

Metastasio was born in Rome within two years of the close of the seventeenth century. As a mere boy he became a ready improvisatore, and inherited the fortune of a man who was no relation to him. The Emperor Charles VI., who in his youth had missed the Spanish throne in the war of succession, and who was more at home in music, poetry, and architecture than in war, called Metastasio to Vienna, where he became the first libretto writer of his time, and highly popular in an age which had no Scribe to give dramatic music an unexpected extension by ingenious combination and picturesque and varied treatment of historical periods. The following is Beyle's estimate of Metastasio:—

"The clearness, the precision, and the facility which characterised the style of this great poet—qualities indispensable for words intended to be sung—make his verses easy to be learned by heart. He was also pathetic. It is difficult to read without shedding tears 'La Clemenza di Tito' or 'Joseph.' Not less remarkable was his versatility and fertility. During fifty years, Metastasio, as the poet-laureate of Vienna, was called on for a cantata for every imperial birth and wedding. What task more arid? All that is expected of the poet is that he should not be detestable; but Metastasio is divine; abundance comes from the womb of sterility."

Quite different from the “dungeon dark and exile drear” of a Dante or a Tasso, was the shady side of the career of Metastasio. His was the minor martyrdom of the greenroom and the antechamber; of the caprices of opera queens, and of the flattering exigencies of imperial amateurs. Take the following tribulations which are painted with the *céladon* and *rose tendre* of a porcelain desert-service:—

“It so happens, as a punishment for my sins,” writes Metastasio, “that the female parts of the ‘Re Pastore’ have so pleased his majesty, that I have been ordered to write a similar piece by next May. It is a formidable affair to have to do with these hussies, the Muses, in the present state of my head, in consequence of my nerves being always on the stretch. My work is the more disagreeable by the restrictions that have been imposed upon me. There can be no question of Greek or Roman subjects, because our chaste nymphs do not wish indecent costumes. I am, therefore, obliged to have recourse to oriental history in order that the women who play men’s parts should be duly wrapt up from head to foot in Asiatic draperies. The contrast between virtue and vice is necessarily excluded from these pieces, because no woman wishes to play an odious part. The number of the principal characters, the duration of the representation, the changes of the scenes, the airs, and almost the number of the words, is limited. Tell me if this is not enough to drive the most patient man out of his senses? Imagine the effect of all this on myself, who am the high priest in this vale of misery.”

The “Life of Metastasio” is, like the other biographies and histories of Beyle, a treatise *de omnibus rebus*—a repertory of the opinions and paradoxes of the author on a multitude of subjects not very closely connected with the business in hand. One of the most curious passages of this book is a defence of the artificial creation of male soprani, as contributing to the musical enjoyment of mankind, in which he drolly opposes the Malthusian theories to those modern philosophers of the French school of the eighteenth century who denounced castration in order to procure a quality of voice which does not exist in nature; for the voice of the male soprano does not resemble that of the female soprano. The notes emitted may be the same, but the force of lungs of the male is so much in excess of that of the female, that it is the hearing of a different instrument. Beyle wrote during the furore for Velluti, and with the eulogies of the celebrated male soprani of the eighteenth century fresh in his recollection; but Velluti was the last of the class, and what was normal half a century or a century ago, would now be a public scandal.\*

\* There is a large mass of curious information on the male soprani of

There is much miscellaneous and interesting criticism scattered through the "Life of Metastasio," for Beyle had begun the course of Italian reading of which there are so many traces in his subsequent works. I note one short extract alluding to Alfieri, a genius of a more masculine sort than Metastasio.

"Alfieri has surpassed all poets in the manner of painting the hearts of tyrants, because, had he not been a less honest man, I believe that on a throne he would himself have been a sublime tyrant."

Beyle admires the style of Alfieri, but thinks Metastasio the superior poet, because the reader gives himself up to the charm of the substance without occupying himself with the form.

Grace was certainly one of the qualities which Metastasio possessed; a characteristic which is not given to the mass of mankind to enjoy. Forcible contrasts astonish and please vulgar minds. "Few men feel Correggio," says Beyle.

"Music ought to produce enjoyment, and Metastasio was the poet of music. His tender genius led him to avoid whatever might give pain to the spectator."

In Metastasio all is certainly pleasant and *amene*, bright and pretty as a rainbow, but he remains *rococo* as completely as if his name was Vanloo or Dietrich, and we scarcely feel justified in going so high for a comparison as Correggio.

*"Histoire de la Peinture en Italie."*

This work was considered by Beyle as his best title to the admiration of the public; but the impartial critic must be allowed certain reserves. Beyle had a vivid feeling for painting, and having resided so long in Italy, he had ample opportunity for producing a remarkable work. He is not the mere chronicler of painter's lives, judiciously culled from predecessors; nor is he the mere critic of the greatest works of the Italian masters. Where he especially shines is in the study of the genius of the Italian race, and in the examination of the economical, social, and political conditions under which so extraordinary an amount of magnitude the last century in a book entitled "Gluck und die Oper," by the late Dr Marx of the Berlin Conservatory—a book that pleases me better than his biography of Beethoven, from the amount of new and curious matter which it contains. Marx was a first-rate contrapuntist, and on the same level as the Voglers and Sechters, but as a musical critic he was rather cold and pedantic, and one must prefer the fire of Riehl, the warm sympathies and charming style of Blaze de Bury, or the piquant acumen of De Lagenevais. On the subject of sopranis, *vide* also De Brosses' treatise already mentioned.

nificent painting, architecture, and ornamental art was produced; and within this sphere he has probably no rival, the more so as he was also familiar with the political history of France and England; less so with that of the lower German or flat Dutch race. Beyle does not seem to have a proper comprehension of, or a proper respect for, the colossal grandeur of the Saxon race, which, although deficient in vivacity, has nevertheless that thoroughness, originality, efficacy, mastery, and completeness of which the Rembrandts, the Beethovens, the Rubenses, and many others are such magnificent types. Nor can it be denied that to the Saxon element Great Britain is chiefly indebted for that orderly labour and economy which is at the root of the power and prosperity of the Empire, and that prosperity is the begetter of art through wealth.

This book of Beyle is, in its present shape, too sporadic; it is unconnected as well as incomplete. There is a synoptical view of the Florentine school, an essay on the beautiful; very full, interesting, and amusing biographies of two out of the numerous painters of Italy, Leonardo and Michael Angelo; and no more than fugitive allusions to many of the most charming painters that Italy has produced. All this the reader, who from the title expected to have a general view of Italian art, must connect for himself as he best may.

When Montesquieu published his "*Esprit des Lois*," people said the title ought to have been "*De l'Esprit sur les Lois*." Beyle's work is in its critical parts "*De l'Esprit sur la Peinture*," rather than a history of Italian painting. But if not a historian, he is certainly a literary artist, a brilliant painter of the atmosphere and conditions of art existence. Beyle walks in the paths that seem pleasant to him, and no others. He has hundreds of desultory pages, but not a dull one; he could no more be flat on any branch of Italian art history, than Rossini could write a buffo air without the fire of genius.

According to Beyle, art is not a necessity, but a luxury; and it is only after a government has settled and secured its territories that it becomes a patron of art. Individuals first warred with individuals, then petty states with petty states; but until those states reposed on their laurels, with territories secured by the prestige of force, there could be no art patronage of a magnificent nature. He points out the sources of art in modern Italy.

"An extreme opulence, and at the same time little personal luxury; every year enormous sums of superfluous money;

vanity, religion, and the love of the beautiful, stimulate all classes to raise monuments. *The how to prove one's wealth*, a primary question in all ages and countries, was then answered by such a person as Agostino Chigi, the banker, who erects a palace, and gets Raphael d'Urbino, the fashionable painter, to decorate it."

When drawing and colour, from rude beginnings, had made considerable progress, then came the free development of expression. "A picture without expression is an image to amuse the eye for a moment. A painter ought, no doubt, to have colour, drawing, and perspective too; but to confound the means with the end is to fail. What does it matter if Santi di Tito was a good draughtsman? Hogarth will live longer than he did. The simple colourists, fulfilling better the conditions of representation, are more esteemed. With equal inanity of expression, a Lord's Supper of Bonifacio costs ten times more than a Descent from the Cross of Salviati."

In art, ostentation precedes taste, just as, in political life, the ages of barbaric pearls and gold precede those of real culture; so it was with Italian painting, when, as in the Byzantine manner, real gilding was mixed with painting. But soon a sounder taste prevailed, and the brightest period of art was that of the second half of the fifteenth and first half of the sixteenth century, or, as the Italians express it, the last half of the *quattro-cento* and the first half of the *cinque-cento*. Beyle remarks that a man born the same year as Titian, that is, in 1477, might have known most of the great painters, supposing him to have had a fair but not excessive longevity. "This happy mortal would have passed his life with Leonardo, Titian, Giorgioni, Raphael, Michael Angelo, Tintoretto, Andrea del Sarto, and Correggio." Beyle therefore asks, "How did it happen that nature, so productive during forty-two years from 1452 (birth of Leonardo) to 1494 (birth of Correggio), was afterwards of such cruel sterility? That is what neither you nor I will ever know."

There appears to be no mystery in the matter. Every art has periods of rise, climax, and decline. If we pass over three centuries from the period indicated by Beyle, we find that, taking the birth of Mozart (January 1756) as a starting-point, and going forward a half century, we find Mozart, Beethoven, Cherubini, Spontini, Auber, Spohr, Weber, Meyerbeer, Rossini, Donizetti, Bellini, Herold, and many others, to have all been born within the half century that followed 1756.

The end of the fifteenth century was, in Italy, the pacific period



at the close of the mediæval anarchy. Guiccardini says that since the Augustan age of the Roman Empire, Italy had never been so happy, so rich, and so tranquil as about the year 1490. The relative security and the reviving civilisation enabled agriculture and commerce to prosper. The basin of the Po was now covered with populous and flourishing cities. The princes vied with each other in the encouragement of the arts. On the other side of the Appenines, at the court of the Medici, the artists, instead of courting the courtiers, were courted by them. Most of these great Florentine painters lived with witty people who adorned the court; and princes, wits, and courtiers were not displeased to see their likenesses reproduced in those representations of sacred and profane history which became the admiration of the world. Even in portrait proper, the costume of the period, so picturesque in form, with rich stuffs, velvet, satin, and gold embroidery, and the bright colours contrasting with the almost uniform sober black of the seventeenth century, greatly aided the art of the painter. Raphael himself did not hesitate to diverge into portrait in order to limn the historic but odious Borgia.

Leonardo and Michael Angelo occupy the foreground of Beyle's view of Italian painting. Of the versatility of the former he says, "A man can only be great by sacrificing his life to one particular line. Now Leonardo had no particular passion for any art. After having brought to perfection the hydraulic system of the Milanese, and made discoveries in optics, modelled the colossal horse of Milan, finished his 'Last Supper,' and his treatises upon painting and natural philosophy, Leonardo da Vinci might believe himself to be the first engineer, the first astronomer, the first painter, and the first sculptor of his age. During several years he really was all that; but Raphael, Galileo, and Michael Angelo supervening successively, and going farther than he did, each in his own peculiar line, Leonardo, although possessed of one of the most remarkable capacities, was first in none."

This is all true; but versatility has been recognised as one of the modes of genius from the days of the Admirable Crichton to our own. Voltaire was not a poet, dramatist, novelist, and historian of the highest class; he was first-rate only as a satirist of social and political abuses; but the totality of Voltaire constitutes a phenomenon of literary genius which nature may not repeat for centuries. Had Leonardo been merely a painter, he would have been classed no doubt with the highest. But Italy has already several of those highest painters, and she has one Leonardo.

If the tendency of a man of great genius is to be many-sided, let humanity by all means enjoy the admirable spectacle.

The biography of Michael Angelo is a lengthy production, but this picturesque figure, this original and daring genius, was certainly well worth all the pains bestowed by Beyle on him. I content myself with giving a *précis* of his character and genius as it appeared to the Frenchman—

“Michael Angelo in his youth was fond of study and solitude. He was considered haughty and eccentric, even insane. He had no friends, and his acquaintances were serious people, such as Annibale Caro.

“Michael Angelo was liberal, and assisted in secret numbers of poor people, especially young people studying the arts. He used to say, ‘However rich I may have been, I have lived like a poor man.’ His sleep was short, and interrupted by annotations of ideas that struck him. In eating he was very frugal. He disliked the interruption of visitors, and was fond of locking himself up in a studio.

“When he saw a defect in a statue, he abandoned it for another. His execution rarely came up to his ideal; hence the comparatively small number of complete works which he left behind. He praised Raphael with sincerity, but did not relish him as we do, and considered his works to be characterised rather by study than by natural genius. Michael Angelo himself created no pupils, his own style being the expression of a fiery soul.”

Beyle was an adorer of Raphael and Correggio, but judging this work in its present form we might ask, How is it that so many other exquisite painters did not interest him? Where is the place of those great masters of expression and feeling, the Peruginos, the Francias, and other men of the Roman, Bolognese, and Florentine schools; and those great Venetians, the sympathetic Bellino, the fascinating Giorgioni, the consummate Titian, the solar and magnificent Paul Veronese?

Besides Italian painting, some attention is also paid in this work to sculpture, especially that of the Greeks. This part of the work is masterly in conception, in argument, and in picturesque detail, comparison, and allusion; but it is too diffuse, and has too much repetition of the same arguments under various guises and metaphors. Beyle’s cardinal argument may be put as follows:—Graven images must have preceded attempts at imitation of external objects by means of drawing, perspective, and colour. Before a house is decorated the shell is first constructed, and the art of the mason certainly preceded that of the painter. Hence the prominence of masonry and sculpture in the more

ancient monuments of antiquity, and hence the cyclopean character of very ancient masonry.

Anthropology was a science almost unknown in Beyle's time ; but for the purposes of his studies on the origin of sculpture, his imagination enables him to resuscitate with much ingenuity the heroic and primitive ages of society. Achilles and the old heroes and demigods had no idea of art, but when the art period arrived, this old legendary history became the proper subject of art. Hence Beyle's saying that "We must seek the ancient Greeks in the back settlements of the United States. A learned professor who prates so glibly of Greek history would be in a pretty funk [*"aurait une belle peur"*] if the real primeval brutal savage Achilles, with his destructive instincts, were to enter his lecture-room."

Beyle points out that the first distinction among savages is strength, and there can be no doubt that the first statues of the gods were suggestive of the appearance of the strongest and handsomest of the warriors of the tribe.

One principal object of sculpture was to perpetuate the memory of deeds of prowess, and sculpture certainly fulfilled this function better in relation to ancient than to the modern modes of fighting. "In a modern battle, the number of those little dramas which end by death have no distinct physiognomy, and one ball kills like another ; but in the sanguinary battles of antiquity it was the sword that decided the day, and every death formed a picture of an exciting character. Moreover, in Greece, the whole of the citizens, without exception, engaged in the business of war ; the stay-at-home loungers were not the majority, as in the modern states of Europe. In Greece, when war took place, there was peril not only for the society, but for the existence of each of the inhabitants. The soldier had to conquer in battle or forfeit his freedom ; the conqueror made a spoil of men, women, and children. Hence the episodes of war were much more immediately interesting and more suitable for sculpture than modern wars to modern sculpture."

The suppression of marring details is another characteristic of the early Greek sculpture. The men of the heroic age were exposed to all the accidents of war, of weather, and of the wear and tear of the system, so that their brows and cheeks were in the course of years furrowed with wrinkles. But these traces of wear and tear were not always reproduced in the images of the demigods and heroes. This suppression of details gives elevation to the antique sculpture. The curiosity is not excited by

what is low or accessorial. It is impossible to avoid agreeing with Beyle in such observations ; perhaps the most complete contrast to Greek sculpture is the painting of the Hamburger Denner.

The study of temperament necessarily enters largely into the labours of the critic of sculpture. The two most prominent and contrasted temperaments being those of the nervous and the athletic man. The nervous men are the pale and haggard producers of art and thought, such as Voltaire, who was almost a skeleton when in advanced age, but with the most expressive wrinkles on his intelligent visage. On the other hand, the athletic men are the rosy Tony Lumpkins, who, with hound and horn, follow the fox to his last lair, who delight in horse-flesh and the sporting clique, who cannot live without muscular action, who prefer dealing in horses and felling bullocks to the polite world at home or abroad. Tom and Jerry dressed like grooms, and frequented the cockpit or Tom Crib's parlour in preference to localities where they might hear the eloquence of a Canning or a Brougham, the wit of a Sydney Smith, or the tender warbling of a Thomas Moore. The contrasting types of nervous and athletic man that strike Beyle, a Frenchman, writing at the beginning of the Restoration, are the academic savant and the swaggering *sabreur* of the lately extinguished Empire.

"Nothing appears more ridiculous to a captain of grenadiers than the contemplative man of letters whom he meets returning from the Institute with his green uniform and embroidery. It is a matter of wonder to him that such a man should be allowed to wear a decoration on his breast. As a contrast, nothing appears more ridiculous to a man of thought and intelligence than the coffee-house life of military men, with that gross boasting which is nicknamed *blague*. The thinker asks himself if it is such a miraculous thing to stand fire since it must be redeemed by incessant vanity and insolence ? These gross *sabreurs* of the Napoleon period could neither think nor speak correctly the French language."

Beyle, following the steps of Cabanis, the great French physiologist of the revolutionary period and the beginning of this century, shows that mode of life does much to determine the inclination to athletic activity or to the nervous contemplative state. The hewer of wood, the porter, and the dock labourer have little sensibility ; not so the tailor, the embroiderer, or the sedentary workman. Artists and men of letters are generally hypochondriac and inclined to procrastination. Climate also acts

on the temperament; the man of the South, with his enforced muscular inactivity, is necessarily a meditative being; he feels pain more acutely than the robust man of action of the North, hence expression in the arts arose naturally in the warmer climates of the South.

The expression of the classes that have leisure is the product of the life of courts, or of a large portion of time being expended on appearance rather than on action. Many writers have painted such a butterfly, with "his indifference to the welfare of society in the form of the state, and his anxiety to please individuals that compose society. In such societies the attachments of individuals to each other are slight, nothing is treated seriously, and even when offence is given, it must be paid off by innuendo or playful allusion. To lose one's temper is to acknowledge having been beaten, an admission that must be studiously avoided."

As might be expected, Beyle enlarges on the sensibility requisite for an artist, and on originality and independence in the mode of working, and on the superiority of the dynamical as contrasted with the mechanical qualities.

"Up to a certain age the pupil does not see nature but through his master.\* When he is formed, he will see his way to imitate nature in such a way as to please persons of elevated soul; but to do that the artist must himself have a soul. A man may be a great general or a great

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\* Even after emancipation from the influence of their first masters, the greatest artists appreciate and partially appropriate from their predecessors what is most analogous to their own genius. The creator of the tender *cantilenas* of "Tancredi" admired Mozart; Mendelssohn went to Sebastian Bach for a model of those real and genuine qualities that do not win immediate popularity, or create an immediate effect. Richard Wagner continued Gluck, with all the experience derived from the ultimate manner of Weber, and from the Beethoven novelties in inflection, and the Beethoven processes of thorough digestion of a theme; and I hope that I may be pardoned the indiscretion or liberty of mentioning, that in a conversation which I had with the illustrious Wilhelm von Kaulbach on painting in general, and on Raphael in particular, I observed that this artist, so truly great in marshalling groups of figures, so as to give a dramatic expression to the important epochs of human history, was more charmed with the power of Raphael in *composition* than with that transcendent, glowing sensuousness that unconsciously produced so many individual types of beauty, grace, and grandeur in the works of the Umbrian. Kaulbach's strong sense of beauty is indisputable; but his *forte* is composition, and therefore the quality he can most appreciate in the greatest of his predecessors. To an Ary Scheffer the supreme Raphael was the Raphael of expression, a San Sisto or a St Cecilia.

legislator without any sensibility, but in the fine arts a man must have a soul even when he imitates the coldest subjects.

"There is a power of vivifying details which is the triumph of genius. In the *St Cecilia* of Raphael, the organ which she has let fall has two of its pipes loose, showing the haste with which she has thrown it on the ground, and is another instance of dramatic genius shown in detail; and in the comic sphere might be cited the alternate coat of coachman or cook in which Jacques appears to answer the call of Harpagon. In Hogarth such traits of genius are so numerous as to dispense with recalling them to the reader's memory."

In the present age, the study of history, archæology, and costume, &c., has made the painters of our day much more accurate than the painters of three centuries ago. But Beyle, like many others, will not accept archæological accuracy as a substitute for genius; just as, in the novels of the mechanical imitators of Walter Scott, there was more still life than life. Beyle deals as follows with the common objection raised against Leonardo da Vinci's treatment of the "*Last Supper* :"—

"It is certain that the apostles and Christ took their meals in a recumbent position, and not seated at a table like the moderns. But if the rendering of usages much exceeds the knowledge of the general run of spectators, they are rather surprised than edified. Vinci was a great artist, precisely because he was not a savant. Poussin made a picture of the *Lord's Supper* in which the apostles are reclining on couches. The demi-savants bestow on it their approbation. The foreshortenings are of difficult execution; but the astonished spectator says a word on the ingenuity of the painter, and passes on his way."

In this work Beyle casts a sidelong glance at French art, and the conditions of art in France, as well as on the French school of fine-art criticism. He certainly is severe on his compatriot artists, and on those critics who occasionally remind one of the English satirist of French fine-art criticism—"Rigaud and Raphael are sublime."

Besides Beyle, France has produced two fine-art critics, who were certainly classic in their way; one of the last century, Denys Diderot; and the other of our own, Gustave Planche. In the sphere of the fine arts Beyle completes the triad; and from the preceding extracts it will be seen that he had much observation, much mature reflection on art, the result of years of study and opportunity to judge; much originality of thought, although often degenerating into paradox, and a style uniting ease with pungency.

Diderot had more general erudition than Beyle, but not Beyle's

central knowledge of the Italian schools. His style is picturesque, strong, and brilliant, but more sententious and less easy and familiar than that of Beyle. We seem to see his brow clouded with the severity of the somewhat pedantic aristarch. He admires Greuze or anathematizes Boucher with full ruffles, buckles, and periwig. Beyle, on the contrary, seems to write in his dressing-gown, not for the public, but to amuse a friend or a familiar circle. This intimacy of Beyle with his reader makes him one of the most charming of intellectual companions and art tattlers.

*"Rome, Naples, et Florence."*

This work is certainly one of the most amusing, instructive, and readable of those which Beyle produced. Here he shows himself to be a master in profound knowledge and felicitous portraiture of the Italian character. It is as lively as Voltaire's Letters on the English, with more practical knowledge of his subject, and more subtle analysis ; he is fearless and fair.

Although "Rome, Naples, et Florence," is the title of the book, it is in fact, and should have been called, "A study of the Italian character, derived from several years' residence in Milan, with occasional sketches of the society of other Italian towns, chiefly Bologna." Milan was Beyle's real Italian home, and as his object was to see the Italians as little mingled with foreigners as possible, and at the same time to have the resources of a large town, and above all, such a musical theatre as the Scala during the heyday of Rossini, Milan was well chosen. He did not want the crowds of travelling English, Russians, and Germans ; he preferred the unadulterated inner Italian society, with all its advantages and defects ; and in the summer there were the charming lakes of Como and Maggiore in the immediate neighbourhood.

Beyle found the Milanese history to be as interesting as a romance of Scott's, particularly from the year 1063, when the priests made a civil war in order not to submit to celibacy, down to the campaign of Francis I. Of the Lombardy of the *sei-cento*, certainly the "Promessi Sposi" is the varied and picturesque illustration. As to the more recent history, he gives a lively sketch of the fright that seized the nobles at the French invasion of 1796 ; of the cessation of luxury ; and of the order into which they put their affairs by economy, payment of debts, and residence on their estates. The previous period in Milan had been one of folly, finery, luxury, and gambling ; of a certain

social brilliancy, but of moral decadence. The noblesse, seeing their very existence threatened by the republican armies and principles, began to rival each other, not in prodigal expenditure, but in severe economy. Ostentation was considered the sign of being a parvenu. "More fortunes have been saved than gained," is certainly true of the very considerable masses of capital which have never failed to exist in Milan from the Restoration in 1814 up to the present time.

But there are still two modes of luxury which, with all their economy, the Milanese have always allowed themselves—noble dwellings and the equipage at the Corso.

"Architecture is more alive in Italy than painting and sculpture. A Milanese banker will be avaricious during fifty years of his life, in order to build a house, the façade of which will cost a hundred thousand francs more than an ordinary wall. The secret ambition of every Milanese is to build a fine house or to put a new face on the old paternal mansion."

With regard to the Corso, which corresponds with our Park review of men, animals, and vehicles, of beau-monde and demi-monde, Beyle appears to have frequented it regularly. In summer, after the early dinner of that country and period, all the equipages were seen at the Corso; there was also for promenade the elevated rampart, with a sylvan foreground, and the magnificent line of the Alps in the distance. Here was the Milanese review of equipages, and the scrutiny of beauty by the unsparing daylight, just as the Scala is the review of female beauty and of toilette by the more indulgent artificial light of the theatre.

It is in intimacy that the Italian character is seen to most advantage. In this respect even a dull little Italian town can be made agreeable. Without the privilege of intimacy, no foreigner can produce pictures of Italian life having any value. What volumes are annually given to the public, full of hazy half-knowledge of this remarkable people, or what is still more offensive, of rash, ready, and presumptuous conclusions! There are many curious little observations in Beyle, which set him quite apart from the general run of analysts of the Italian character, and this arose from his having been a man of sympathetic temperament, and from having enjoyed that inner intimacy which is only attainable by years of residence in societies where foreigners do not abound. Beyle says—

"At Paris, almost every time that a man visits a friend, he has to break a slight surface of ice that has formed itself since



the last meeting. Midnight sounds, and the lady of the house dismisses you."

Not so in Italy, the same people see each other every day, come to know the most occult traits in each other's character, and have a proverb that "you must accept a friend with his defects." Beyle points out the three plagues that afflict Italian society—ignorance, idleness, and sensual pleasure; and that, besides music, the chief occupation of the higher classes having leisure is love. The other enjoyments of intellect during the years of reaction that followed 1814 were grievously obstructed. The press was gagged by the censorship; the espionage poisoned society and friendship with mistrust. On the contrary, the lax manners lent themselves to those female friendships and intimacies which were a peculiarity of Italian town society.

Beyle has some truly felicitous contrasts of Italian with other nationalities. He admits that a German excels in possession of the sympathetic imagination, which enables him to put himself in the place of other nationalities. "If he writes a history of Assyria or Mexico, he becomes for the time being an Assyrian or a Mexican. The undramatic Frenchman is much more expeditious. In a few minutes he pronounces his Gallic fiat on a whole people, with their moral and physical habits. If they do not square with French prejudices, they are declared to be execrable, and his mind at once passes to the consideration of something else."

The superabundant encyclopædic loquacity of the Frenchman is an annoyance to the Italians, and an object of ridicule to them. Beyle, in his happiest vein, contrasts an unliterary Italian lady with such an intellectual coxcomb.

"An object of admiration, or of impatience, to an Italian, is a lively and clever French fop, who in the brief period of an hour descants on Homer, political economy, Bolivar, Raphael, chemistry, Mr Canning, the trade of the Romans, Vesuvius, the Emperor Alexander, Erasmus, Paisiello, and Sir Humphry Davy. After this amiable conversation, the Italian, who has attempted to spur up his intelligence to a gallop, in order to keep pace with the volubility of his interlocutor, gets a splitting headache. Now, if a Frenchman were to forget all literary allusions, and apply that vivacity which is the brilliant privilege of his race simply to the immediate and external circumstances of the journey or picnic, as the case may be, he would be sure to shine as a meteor in the eyes of the Italians. But he must stop short when he finds that he is not understood, and he must muster up sufficient self-restraint to remain silent for at least ten minutes per hour. All is lost if he is set down as a prattler, but there is no harm

in appearing silent. A lieutenant who has not read Laharpe would be far more agreeable to an Italian lady than a charming young Parisian who is a member of the Society of Christian Morals, and has published two pretty poems.

"The wit [*esprit*] which amuses a Frenchman is a bore to an Italian. The effect of wit in Italy is to dry up the conversation; anything like piquant reserves or half revelations of meaning is thrown away on people who speak only of what interests them, who speak of such matters seriously and at full length, with passionate and picturesque details. Every Italian being a little silent, savage, and *furibond*, and taking a deep interest in certain things, it is superfluous to go to conversation for emotion. The passions of an Italian, hatred, love, play, cupidity, and pride, are a sufficient excitement for him. The Italian who is accustomed to judge whether the people whom he admires or hates are sincere or otherwise, the smallest affectation freezes him, as something inconsistent with the *dolce far niente* and voluptuous reverie which is his habitual pleasure and resource. The mistrust engendered by espionage does not allow him to have any *laissez aller* with strangers; his habitual society is that of people whom he has known for many years."

The foregoing may be set down as the quintessence or condensation of Beyle's observations on the contrasts between Italian reserve and French gaiety and loquacity. Every person who has lived much and long in Italian society must recognise the profound truth of these observations. A good generation must elapse before people will cease to say "*Un bel tacere non fu mai scritto.*" Habits so inveterate do not disappear on the mere publication of a liberal constitution; but that a great change will take place in the Italian character may be confidently predicted. If it was the numerous small tyrannies of the Middle Ages and the revival that engendered mistrust, the disappearance of all the remains of even the milder successors of the Viscontis, Medici, and Scaligeri, and the gradual adoption of constitutional forms (although in many respects against the Italian grain), must work a great reformation in the Italian character.

Whatever happens, let them remain in the social sphere with that *gentilezza* of their own which cannot be denied them. Let them not become English dandies or French fops. On this Beyle says—

"The race of English and French fops, those people who dress and ride in a particular manner, has not yet passed the Alps. To have the air of cool contempt for or disregard of what is of importance is a folly which the Italians do not practise. If a young man in Italy clears a ditch on horseback, it is with earnestness or with an explosion of joyousness. The ostentatious cramming of people at an evening party, so common in Paris and London, would in Italy be considered a violation of good taste and common sense."

Beyle found the society of Bologna more radically Italian than that of Milan, *i.e.*, with more depth of intrigue to arrive at ends, more ingenuity, and more mistrust. The society was critical of the ridiculous side of the Roman clergy. Bologna was during centuries a city with a distinguished university, where the professors and men of science maintained a certain liberty of speech. Beyle does not paint himself as having been at the first very cordially received; but it must be remembered that neither nobles, priests, nor laity could have very pleasant recollections of the French occupation, with its innumerable arbitrary acts, which upset the whole framework of social existence, with oppressive exactions, confiscations, and grinding military conscriptions to boot. All liberal Frenchmen were supposed to be touched with atheism, perhaps freemasons; hence a fear of being denounced to the local Papal authorities as being too familiar with Frenchmen who had served the Empire.

"You see clearly, on entering, that the host has made the sacrifice of quitting the intimacy of habitual society, or the agreeable reverie of a melancholy soul or absorbing occupation. The pain and ennui of receiving you, and of saying a few words, are striking. The constraint and want of ease are as remarkable as the satisfaction which your departure produces. Travellers who are accustomed to the seducing forms of Paris leave the house in a rage. Assuredly this reception is not gracious; but I travel to find something new, and to see men as they are. If people wish for only a polished exterior, why leave the Boulevard des Italiens?"

"Many French people are angry that their vanity has been unsuccessful in an Italian drawing-room. They leave the place, and ever afterwards cry down the society with the perfidy of wounded self-love. They will not understand that the market of vanity, *i.e.*, the truck of insincere eulogies, is not open in Italy. People there seek their happiness in emotions, and not in piquant *bon mots* or pleasant stories. Italy is the country of reverie, but not of *French wit*. Espionage renders conversation a dangerous pleasure, hence it has fallen into desuetude. Even in French society, where vanity reigns, witty men, such men as Voltaire and Beaumarchais, had a succession of struggles. In Italy their career would have ended in the dungeons of small princes. The object of a citizen is to become rich by economy, and to have nothing to do with the functions of government."

Although Rome figures in the title of this book, there is little matter about Rome. But one sentence is expressive:—"All here is decline—recollection, association, and death. Active life is at London and Paris."

We have a picture of a young provincial Italian of the Roman States, whom he contrasts with "the young Frenchman occupied

with his cravat ; who reads everything, forgets the contents of a thousand volumes, and is intent on being considered a man of wit. On the contrary, the young provincial Roman is brought up in a superstitious college, with books of the sixteenth century ; is turned out by the priests savage, taciturn, and mistrustful. He reads Vico instead of De Lolme or Montesquieu. After a few years he becomes *cavaliere servente* ; love, jealousy, and the passions take hold of him, and he entirely ceases to cultivate his mind."

The practical character and superiority of the Piedmontese to all the other Italians, so as to show that, although speaking the Italian tongue, they are a more energetic race, was remarked by Beyle, when no one dreamed that they would end by placing themselves at the head of the military and political Italy of unity and renovation.

"If I were a king," said Beyle, "all my ambassadors should be Piedmontese ; they are the most sagacious people of the universe." Acute Beyle ! Remove the Piedmontese element from the Italian army and civil administration, and new Italy would not be long of relapsing into the old divisions.

### "*De l'Amour.*"

This work, which fell flat on its first appearance, was subsequently destined to be one of the pillars on which the fame of Beyle rests as a philosophic student of human nature. It is in some respects a sort of continuation of "Rome, Naples, et Florence," for Italian society furnished a large portion of the matter on which he worked. Beyle says in his preface—"Although this little volume treats of love, it is not a romance, and, above all, is not amusing as a romance : it is an exact and scientific description of a sort of folly that is rare in France." He draws distinctions between the different sorts of love, and maintains that the incessant social intercourse, without which French people of the easier class cannot live, may be favourable to gallantry, but that the restricted circle and relative solitude in which Italians live is more favourable to passionate love, as distinguished from mere sympathetic attachment, which latter is most usual in modern France.

Passionate love (*amour passion*) is such as that of Heloise for Abelard ; sympathetic attachment (*amour goût*) is such as that which reigned in Paris about 1760, and of which we have very full illustrations in the pages of Duclos, Marmontel, Madame d'Epinaÿ, and Champfort. According to Beyle, a well-bred man

knows beforehand what to do on every opportunity that presents itself, whether to display wit or to act with delicacy. This sympathetic attachment does not lead men to the overthrow of their interests in order to gratify their desires, which is very frequently the case with passionate love.

According to Beyle, there is another sort of love into which vanity enters largely, such as to be attached to a lady who has vogue or fashion; and Beyle admits that this product of the world of sympathies is more peculiar to France than to most other countries. In France more than elsewhere women have been the umpires of the merit of men from the Provençale courts of love down to modern times.

On the subject of the beginning or inception of love, he passes in review the successive grades of emotion, remarking that a solitary or domestic existence, interrupted by social intercourse, balls, &c., on rare occasions, is the most favourable to promotion of the passion.

There is first admiration, then hope. Beauty he considers to be, in relation to human foibles, “a promise of happiness.” After this first process, then comes what Beyle calls “crystallisation.” The lover has pleasure in adoring his mistress, as Don Quixote his Dulcinea, with all the perfections, moral and physical; and every incident of life finds in the mind of the admirer a mysterious link with the object of his affections. The sight of an orange grove near the tender azure of the unruffled Mediterranean suggests the pleasure which he would have in the admired fair one uniting her enjoyment of the scene with his own.

But in the midst of this first rapture, doubt, jealousy, or coolness interpose, but merely like clouds on the horizon, to create a gloom that is temporary, and is succeeded by hues more brilliant and various than those which preceded it. He becomes re-convinced of her perfections and of her love for him. Love, according to Beyle, is like the fever: it is kindled or extinguished quite independently of human will; and from the moment that a man loves, he ceases to see things in their true light, and adopts a new logic, suggested by the dominant passion. For instance, beauty itself is dethroned by love, for the loved woman is preferred to one who, by general suffrage, may be the most beautiful.

Even the little defects, such as a slight mark of the smallpox, throw a man into a state of reverie and sensibility when he sees

something similar on the face of another woman, because he has a thousand delicious sensations in his memory which have been associated with even this natural defect. That which is positive ugliness becomes a relative attraction in his partial eyes.

Beauty is certainly a great conqueror, but, like all great conquerors, has now and then a partial check ; and if beauty is defeated, or, as Beyle says, dethroned by love, it sometimes, nay, often, has rebuffs to sustain from intelligence or common sense. Beyle gives an instance of a young lady who admired a very handsome young man who had no ideas in conversation. The mamma asked him to spend eight days in the country with mother and daughter. Familiarity brought the fatal disclosure of the complete inanity of the young gentleman, and the young lady was cured of her foible.

On the subject of jealousy, Beyle makes some remarks of signal truth and profundity, for which the reader must be referred to the work itself. His theory is briefly this :—The admiration of the lover goes on in *crescendo* measure. He discovers new perfections in her, and every associated circumstance gives intensity to the passion ; but when jealousy arises, the same habit of the mind produces an opposite effect. The perfections are as patent as ever, but every reflection that they are for the rival, and not for the first love, is as a dagger planted in his breast.

Another of the episodal traverses of love is pique. The self-love is wounded ; pique overlooks the apparent object, and seeks not possession, but mere victory. Beyle might have added that pique is, in bad hearts, the first station on the road to revenge. The truly elevated mind neither feels nor shows pique. The man of the world may feel pique, but does not show it.

Of women-hunters, Beyle sets up two types as offering a considerable contrast. These are Werther and Don Juan—the former most abundant in Germanic, the latter in Latin countries, more particularly in France. The Don Juans, according to Beyle, require a certain number of the qualities that are esteemed in the world—intrepidity, resource, coolness when needed, and, above all, the power to amuse. The reverse of the medal is, that they are either short-lived or have a dull old age.

A romantic passion makes the mind more keenly appreciative of the beauties of art and nature, moonlight, grand or pathetic music, poetry, and the beautiful in every form. Every tree and every rock associates itself with the fair object of admiration. The organisation is no longer in a state of calm independence,

but suffering from morbid impressions. 'The Don Juans do not suffer from this charming malady ; they have all their wits about them, like other hunters after prey. They are as the falcon of the air, or the shark of the waters. The Don Juans belong mostly to the upper classes, because their impressionability has been already used up ; they have become pure egotists, because conscious egotists. The sentimental admirer hides his passion from the public gaze, but the French Don Juan is not afraid of a detestable publicity.

Beyle's theory both of Frenchwomen and of Frenchmen is, that those who please generally cannot create or reciprocate a profound affection. They have become masters and mistresses of all the forms of society, but by daily and hourly draughts of sensibility the well thereof has been dried up, and has disappeared.

Great passions are more frequent in the rural districts than in Paris. "A young lady hears that her relative, Edward, who is about to return from the army, is a young man of the greatest distinction, but that he would like to see her before asking her hand from her parents. She sees a young stranger at church ; she hears him named Edward, she thinks only of him ; she loves him. Eight days afterwards, the real Edward (but not he of the church) arrives ; on which she grows pale, and would be forever unhappy if she should be married to him."

Of Italian female beauty Beyle speaks with enthusiasm. He maintains that so profound is the impression made on man by this high class of beauty, that it is a misfortune to have known it, because it renders one insensible to the beauty of all other climes. Out of Italy, Beyle says that he preferred the conversation of men.

Surely Beyle must have seen no lack of female beauty during his visit to England, although dark lustrous eyes and pure pallid complexions are more frequent in the South than in the North. In Italy female beauty fades sooner, but in regularity of feature and in expression there would be little difficulty in according Italian women the first place. If they have little culture, they have great natural tact ; and if they have not the refinement and distinction of Paris and London, they are free from all affectation. Many have a proclivity to artifice, but in manner they are free from artificiality.

The Italian defect of corruption is, apropos of the tender passion, most amusingly hit off by Beyle.

When the cool practical place-hunter or solicitor of the favours of the great arrives in the little capital of a state, his first care is to pay court to some lady in whose particular intimacy the great man lives. "Chi avvicina adesso?" To what lady does he gravitate at present? is the first important question in the operations of the solicitor or place-hunter in the Italy of the past.

But if Beyle laughed at the peculiarities of Italian manners, the sardonic grin was equally visible in treating of the French and English character.

"Perfection in the little cares of *savoir vivre* and toilette, great good nature, no genius, daily attention to a hundred little things, incapacity to be occupied for more than three days with the same event—a pretty contrast to puritanical severity, biblical cruelty, strict probity, timid and suffering pride, and universal cant. And yet such are the two first nations of the world."

To satirise the vanity of his fellow-countrymen is a favourite amusement of Beyle; but to deny them genius! *Nul génie* is surely an unmerited hit for the nation that produced Descartes, Molière, Le Sage, Voltaire, and Mirabeau. It is nevertheless true that France has produced a greater number of writers than any other country who have attained European popularity by mere style covering a very slender stock of independent and original thought.

Although "De l'Amour" is a special essay on the tender passion, there is much episodic literary criticism, which grows naturally out of the argument in hand; and this literary matter is quite as good in manner and matter as the rest of the book. Beyle has no respect for the greatest idols in the fane of French popularity, and he shows himself to be an iconoclast of thew and sinew against everything that has rhetorical display. "La phrase impatientante à la Chateaubriand" is lustily mauled. Take the following on Rousseau, which I dare not translate, and prefer offering to the reader in the original:—

"Il n'y a qu'une grande âme qui sait avoir un style simple, c'est pour cela que Rousseau a mis tant de rhétorique dans 'La Nouvelle Héloïse' ce qui la rend illisible à trente ans."

Madame de Staël is no better treated by him. Certainly the Parisian *bureaux d'esprit* find no favour with him.

"Voici un blasphème, moi Hollandais, j'osé dire: les Français n'ont ni le vrai plaisir de la conversation ni le vrai plaisir du théâtre; au lieu de délaissement et de laisser aller parfait c'est un travail. Au nombre des fatigues qui ont hâté la mort de



Madame de Staël j'ai ouï compter le travail de la conversation pendant son dernier hiver.”

Mohammed used to admit that love was the most intense of all human enjoyments except prayer. But Beyle had not, and perhaps could not conceive, the fervour, the exaltation, the absorption, and the delight which the religious instinct strongly developed gives to certain minds. The comparison of love to political power is pale and colourless compared with the ecstasy of the religious sentiment, and, as given by Beyle, is infelicitous. The first shake of the hand of the beloved woman is compared by Beyle to the primiciate of political power in the case of “a man who a quarter of an hour before has been named Minister by Napoleon.” Was such a person a possessor of power? Was he not a mere clerk of a sharp taskmaster, who did not, and would not, delegate power to anybody? It was not power, but a temporary favour or protection, with self-love tickled by the consideration that Napoleon only gave high offices to capable people.

The discussion of marriages of passion and marriages of interest give ample scope for contrasts of the prosaic and the romantic character. According to Beyle, Marlborough had the prosaic, and Henri IV., in love in his old age, the romantic soul. Don Quixote was romantic, Sancho prosaic of the lowest grade; the master tall and pale, the squire squat and fat; the master full of heroic and romantic contemplations, the squire full of base and ingenious calculations directed to his selfish enjoyment.

The schemers, jobbers, misers, and all the other categories of egotistical sharks who make money their be-all and end-all in human life, are satirised in almost the whole series of Beyle. “Immense respect for money is the great defect of the Englishman and Italian; it is less sensible in France, and reduced to its just proportions in Germany.” This may have been true in Beyle's time, when Weimar was the light of Germany, but a colossal economical development, the application of science to metallurgy and manufactures, the spread of railways, the consequent wealth, and the existence of three of the greatest Stock Exchanges in Europe (Vienna, Berlin, and Frankfort), have revolutionised the Germany of Beyle, which a generation ago blended attic culture with Spartan frugality.

Had Beyle lived to see this invasion of luxury, would he have considered men more happy? We may answer for him in the negative by his own testimony.

"The art of being happy is like poetry. In spite of the improvement of everything, Homer, two thousand seven hundred years ago, had more talent than Lord Byron. In an attentive perusal of Plutarch I think I can see that people were more happy in Sicily under Dion than we are now, although they had neither the printing press nor iced punch."

In spite of paradox and oddity, "*L'Amour*" abounds in profound and acute observations on the tender passion, and has, moreover, much miscellaneous matter, which make it most pleasant reading; and the work, which was on its first publication a complete failure, has since Beyle's death had a sale of thousands of copies. Its profound analysis of the ruling passion of man is as curious to the philosophic reader as its numerous anecdotes are entertaining to the public in general. Some of its maxims, such as "Character is the habitual manner of seeking happiness," will live for ever, from their profound truth and curious felicity.

*"Racine et Shakespeare."*

Before we begin with this book, let us say something of the French Classicists and Romanticists.

The so-called Renaissance in architecture was in France eminently felicitous, and accompanied with a large amount of originality, as evinced in the works of its great masters, Philibert Delorme, Ducerceau, and others. It has given to France a native school of architecture at once picturesque and commodious; susceptible of grand lines without austerity, and of pleasing details compatible with a grandiose unity. This, of course, is apparent to those of unprejudiced judgment, not to those who may be determined to see beauty only in frigid Greek or florid Gothic.

That the revival of classical lore should also have influenced all other departments of art was natural. Those who delight in Callot, Watteau, Fragonard, Lantara, and Greuze, do not regret the elevated genius displayed in countless classical scenes of a Nicolas Poussin, or the glorious classicism of a Claude.

The Republic, at the close of last century, gave a sort of impulse to a classicism more tame, accurate, and frigid than the first renaissance, which was a free and genial paraphrase of antiquity. Greece and Rome had been republics, and the French republicans, abdicating their own Gallic national development, wished to ape Greeks and Romans, as if all the world was a

stage, and all the men and women in it players of Greek and Roman life over again. Récamier and De Staël were dressed in their day as Roman matrons. Chairs and tables were copied from the walls of Pompeii or the museums of antique art. Time was no longer divided into weeks and months, but into decades, frimaires, and brumaires. Consulates, tribunats, and other offices of antique pattern had a fleeting existence. A public dinner could not be given without Cato, Brutus, and Leonidas being dragged in neck and crop to eke out the platitudes of the new democracy and spurious philanthropy.

Louis David expended a large amount of undoubted genius in drawing and composition in the production of rather cold and statuesque pictures of the moving scenes of antiquity. How infinitely more valuable than his Socrates or his Sabines would have been a few scenes of the French Revolution by a man daily sitting in the Convention, and familiar with the face and figure lines of every one of the actors in that greatest and most lugubrious of human dramas! David missed the opportunity. Gros, on the contrary, with much less genius than David, struck out in a better path when he reproduced the military scenes of the Consulate and the Empire in their most picturesque aspects.

That the tragedies of Racine and Corneille should be prominent in the dramatic literature of the day was, of course, natural. They brought before the public those celebrated Greeks and Romans that were in all mouths through the vehicle of a poetry that was the glory of France. The eminent genius of Talma, and the considerable talent of the Duchesnois and Georges, sustained those performances, and, patronised as they were by the Emperor Napoleon, who had no special relish for opera, the Theatre Français was during the Empire in the full tide of prosperity. But with the Restoration a new spirit came over the French mind. Shakespeare and Schiller, although not on the boards, were translated, and in the hands of all literary persons. Racine and Corneille were not set aside or decried, but their exclusive possession of the stage was disapproved and vigorously resisted.

After this short introduction, let us now proceed with the theories of our author. Beyle held that the modern generation was quite dissimilar from those marquises wearing black full-bottomed wigs, worth a thousand crowns apiece, who, in 1670, passed judgment on the pieces of Racine; therefore modern tragedy ought to suit modern ideas. They should be written in

prose, and not in long-winded Alexandrine verse; the action should be rapid, and free from lengthened tirades; and, moreover, the subject of those tragedies should be taken rather from French national history than from the history of Greece and Rome. The former are full of interest to a Frenchman, while the latter left him quite cold. Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides were Romanticists in their day, because they gave to the Athenians subjects of fresh and palpitating interest, which accorded with their manners and corresponded with current ideas. But in our days, many things which delighted the Greeks would give us a fit of yawning.

"Shakespeare," says Beyle, "was romantic, because he presented to the English of 1590 the sanguinary catastrophes of their own civil wars, with a number of refined representations of the movements of the human heart, with the most delicate shades of passion. A hundred years of civil war, treasons, capital executions, and generous acts of devotion and sacrifice, had prepared the subjects of Elizabeth for this species of tragedy, which has nothing of the artificial life of courts. The naïveté of detail, which the French tragedies in Alexandrine verse affect to despise, and which in our days we so prize in 'Rob Roy' and 'Ivanhoe,' would have appeared deficient in dignity in the eyes of the proud marquises of the age of Louis XIV."

The impotence of the French Alexandrines is somewhat comically illustrated by a quotation from M. Legonvé's tragedy of "Henri IV." Here was a hero and a subject which, in prose, might have been made of telling effect. Every one remembers the plain speech of the good-hearted Henri, wishing the poorest peasant in the kingdom to have a dish of fowl for the family dinner on Sunday. But the good plain French of Henri IV. is completely travestied in the grandiloquent lines of M. Legonvé—

"Je veux enfin qu'au jour marqué pour le repos  
L'hôte laborieux des modestes hameaux  
Sur la table moins humble ait, par ma bienfaisance  
Quelques-uns de ces mets réservés à l'aisance."

The reader will see that the original flavour of the good-natured monarch's sentiment has quite evaporated from these truffled verses.

Beyle goes over the ground of the question of the unities, which Dr Johnson had previously decided with such mastery.

"Macbeth, an honest man, in the first act assassinates his king and benefactor; the spectator is moved and instructed by

phases of passion the most magnificent in poetry ; but all this fine development would be missed by the tragedy on the Racine model.” As Dr Johnson maintained, if the spectator supposes a sheet of canvas to be a wood or a palace, he may also suppose long intervals of time between each act. The opposition to Shakespeare in France, now completely overcome, was of long duration. Even Voltaire called him a barbarian with astonishing flashes of genius (“avec des lueurs étonnantes”).

“Shakespeare,” says Beyle, “overthrew a number of those theatrical conventions which the Laharpes and other much-vaunted rhetoricians of the eighteenth century had caused the French to contract ; and what is worse is, that our vanity makes us pretend that these rules are in accordance with nature. The fact is, that the habits of a French audience were shocked by things that were new and unusual. If Talma wore a powdered wig in the part of ‘Manlius,’ the public would have laughed and hissed ; but had Lekain, one of the great predecessors of Talma, played the same part without a powdered wig, the public of 1760 would have been equally shocked or moved to ridicule.” Fitness, like beauty, is looked upon by Beyle to be quite relative. “Nothing is so beautiful to the toad as the female toad.”

These theories of Beyle appeared to be abominable heresies to the Academicians and Classicists of the old school and M. Auger, whose name perhaps will be perpetuated solely by its association with the lance which Beyle breaks ; for the Romanticists issued a pamphlet combating the new theories. Beyle rejoined by a continuation of his argument, preceded by a preface somewhat in the ironic vein.

“One day, five or six months ago, the French Academy continued the slow and almost imperceptible progress which is leading it towards the close of the monotonous labour of the dictionary. All were asleep, except the perpetual secretary, Auger, when by accident the word *romanticist* was pronounced. Suddenly the langour was changed for feelings of a much more animated sort ; and I can imagine the grand inquisitor, Torquemada, surrounded by judges and familiars of the Inquisition, when he has had the good fortune to see a Luther or a Calvin brought before judges who adhered to sound doctrines. Every face will have expressed the thought, ‘By what punishment sufficiently cruel can we make him die ?’”

In this second pamphlet, Beyle showers his contempt on those who would prefer the gasconades of Achilles in “Iphigénie” to

the speeches of the "William Tell" of Schiller. All the great writers, according to Beyle, were romantic in their time; but after their death, the people who copied them, instead of opening their eyes and imitating nature, were the Classicists.

This discussion was a matter of lively interest to M. de Lamartine, the popular poet of the Restoration, who did not agree with all Beyle's propositions. He writes to a friend, "I have read with pleasure the work of M. Beyle. He has said what all people were about to say; he has made clear and palpable what was a confused conception of right-thinking people. "A certain instinct drives people out of the beaten track, and it is important to know the object to be attained and the road by which it may be arrived at. But Beyle has forgotten that the object of art is not merely the imitation of nature, but the beautiful. He should not have called Pigault le Brun romantic in the favourable acceptation of the word. Pigault le Brun is popular, which is a different thing; and M. Beyle should not have recommended an abandonment of verse in modern poetry, for verse or rhythm is the *beau idéal* in expression, and it would be a degradation to abandon it. It should be perfected, not destroyed. The ear is a part of the man, and harmony one of the secret laws of the mind. They cannot be neglected without the commission of an error. We may be romantic in thought, but we should be classic in expression."

It is impossible not to agree with M. de Lamartine as regards most species of poetry. Deprive a Tasso or a Byron of rhyme, and they lose half their value; but, for the familiar colloquy and rapid action of a comedy, verse is a clog and a begetter of ennui, with all due respect for the theories of a Théophile Gautier and the practice of a Ponsard, and other modern French writers of drama and comedy. Melodious verse and rhyme give exquisite enjoyment to the mind's ear of the solitary reader, but are not for the physical tympanum of a theatrical audience, moved by well-enchained action or salient dialogue.

The causes of laughter in comedy are treated with a certain amount of ingenuity in "Racine et Shakespeare," and also in a small separate essay on laughter which he wrote in 1823.

According to Beyle, nothing complicated which deeply occupies the intelligence can produce laughter, the elements of which are the *obvious* and the *unexpected* ("la clarté et l'imprevue"). If the laughable is associated with something causing in us indignation

it does not operate, for we think of ourselves, and of some sort of hurt or damage done to our interests.

Laughter is sometimes the internal enjoyment of some mishap that happens to a person superior to us, and we enjoy the momentary inferiority of that other person. “The French nation,” says Beyle, “above all, the Gascons and people of the South, are lively, light, and vain, and formed expressly for laughter, and therefore contrasting with the Italians, who are a passionate nation, always transported with hatred or love, and having something else to do than to laugh.”

Beyle ought to have excepted the Venetians, who certainly have the innate love of laughter, and have produced not only the truly classic Goldoni, but many others. Italian comedy in general would be rather a confirmation of Beyle’s theory, for the modern declamatory comedies of a Cicconi and a Castel Vecchio cannot produce anything but ennui on people who are used to the French, German, and English comic repertory. Goldoni produces as hearty laughs and as pleasant pictures of human nature as any modern writers of comedy, and need not fear a comparison with a Sheridan, a Beaumarchais, or a Kotzebue.

French literature certainly has a greater number of laughers than English literature, and easy and elegant pleasantry is certainly much more diffused through the Parisian than through the London press; but in the power to produce the sardonic broad grin, what giants England has had in Swift, Sterne, Fielding, Smollett, Dickens, and Thackeray!

If the author of this biography may venture on a theory of the cause of laughter, he should be inclined to say that it was a disagreement between proposition and reality. For instance, Theodore Hook represents a pompous nobleman, who has smuggled himself into an omnibus, breaking down in St James’s Street in this humble vehicle, amid the laughter of his acquaintances standing at club windows opposite. In this case, the proposition is the dignity and decorum of the peerage; but the reality is a tumble-down in the dirt out of a broken vehicle. When a tenor in the midst of a tender air has a fit of coughing or sneezing, the proposition is music; but the reality is a sudden interruption of the music by coughing.

As events present themselves to the human mind, there is simultaneously a latent conception of what ought to follow according to the laws of natural sequence. When this latent expectation is suddenly disappointed in a manner which is quite

unaccompanied with serious mental or physical pain to the observed or the observer, the ridiculous is thus created. In reality, Beyle's theory of "the simple and unexpected," although perhaps not sufficiently exhaustive, contains a large portion of the truth.

Wit, which has been defined as the art of tracing distant resemblances, is certainly a frequent source of laughter, but not of prolonged merriment, such as some ridiculous situation created by a violation of the laws of congruity.

## BIOGRAPHY OF ROSSINI.

### *"Vie de Rossini."*

In order to seize Beyle's point of view in relation to Rossini, we must remember that the music which he knew and enjoyed was that of Haydn, Mozart, Cimarosa, and Paisiello. Beyle wrote the "*Vie de Rossini*" just as Beethoven was composing the last of his great works, the "*Missa Solennis*," and just before the decline of his inventive powers. But the modern Germans were a sealed book to Beyle.

But Beyle had one advantage not to be undervalued in a biographer of Rossini. The works of Cimarosa, Paisiello, and Paer were, during Beyle's first residence in Italy, still on the effective repertory, and therefore he could judge of the leap which the Rossinian genius had made in a more vivid and accurate manner than would be possible in our day. A work of absolute music may be judged by a musician in the score, or perhaps even through the pianoforte; but an opera must be heard, and even seen, in order to judge of the genius with which the composer has found musical ideas for the generally slight framework of the libretto.\*

\* The "*Matrimonio Segreto*" of Cimarosa, notwithstanding certain antiquated inflections, is still heard from time to time. But Ferdinand Paer seems to be fairly dead. Although voracious of music of all schools and periods, I have heard only two operas of Paer, one an English version of "*Sargino*" about the year 1827-28; and some years later "*Agnese*" at the King's Theatre. Tamburini considered the insane father to be his best part; but I found the music flat at a period when "*Freyschütz*" and "*La Muette de Portici*" had successively taken the town by storm. I have heard two works of Paisiello at Brussels and Ragusa, but they sounded like vaudeville, and not opera music. They reminded me of the musical dramas of the younger Colman, such as "*Inkle and Yarico*," which were so popular in the first part of this century.



Beyle does not go further back into purely Italian opera than Cimarosa and Paisiello.

"The beau ideal in music changes every thirty years, hence, seeking to give an idea of the revolution operated by Rossini, it has been useless to go higher than Cimarosa and Paisiello. When, about the year 1800, those two great men gave up composing, they had been during the previous twenty years the purveyors of novelty to all the opera-houses of Italy and Europe, therefore their style had none of the charm of the *unexpected*. Pachiarotti, in the retirement of his villa at Padua, surrounded by his gardens and curious furniture, told me how the Milanese used to make him nightly sing five times over an air of Cimarosa. How, therefore, can human nature eternally admire what it admires with such *furor*? An air repeated after ten years' interval no longer intoxicates. Mathematics produces a pleasure that is always equal. Music occupies the other extremity of human means of enjoyment. The science of morals, history, romances, and poetry, which occupy on the gamut of our pleasures all the interval between mathematics and the opera buffa, give enjoyments less lively and more durable."

The above remarks of Beyle have the usual piquancy, but they are applicable to Italian rather than to the great masters of German music. The Italians have been for two centuries the ingenious musical *modistes* of Europe; the Germans, its musical architects. Sacchini, Piccini, Guglielmi, and Paisiello, all enjoyed a wonderful vogue, but, like triumphal arches of canvas for a pageant, leave no trace of their existence except in historical record. How different with the eternal granite and bronze of Handel, Bach, Gluck, Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven, who had the complete mechanical as well as the dynamical faculty—the inborn German patience to do the fullest justice to the idea by a complete technical development! We have seen the undue excess of this in our own time; Meyerbeer, in his "*Africaine*," accumulating effort on effort after his invention had dried up; and Richard Wagner applying all the resources of musical science to not over musical ideas.\*

After some notice of Cimarosa and Paisiello, Beyle sketches very neatly the total eclipse of Simon Mayer and Ferdinand Paer by the rise of Rossini on the musical firmament.

\* I had an interesting conversation with Rossini in 1869, at his apartments in the Chaussée d'Antin, on his early career and on music in general. He said to me, "When the young people nowadays bring me their compositions, what strikes me most forcibly is the rage for complication." My answer was, "In Italian painting the *macchinisti* came after the men of genius of the *quattro-cento* and *cinque-cento*."

"The misfortune of these men was, that Rossini came ten years too soon. The life of the music of an (Italian) opera being thirty years, these masters have a right to complain of destiny not allowing them to complete their time in tranquillity. Mayer is the most scientific master of the interregnum (between Cimarosa and Rossini). His compositions have the faultless accuracy of Boileau; but if we pass to an opera of Rossini, one seems immediately to breathe the pure air of the high Alps. The young composer abounds in new ideas, sometimes succeeding, sometimes failing; it is the prodigal disorder of wealth without bounds. Mayer was in music what Dr Johnson was in English prose—a man of a pompous and heavy manner, remote from the spontaneous, but not without solid merits which secured the respect of the public. This emphatic art was annihilated by Rossini. In our own city of Paris it is intelligible that our so-called classics should be opposed to Shakespeare. On the day when 'Macbeth' will be played, what will become of our modern tragedies?"

The serious style of Rossini was substantially founded on that of Mozart, his comic style on that of Cimarosa. But there is internal evidence to show that the ease and naturalness of the sonatas of Haydn must have captivated the youthful Gioacchino. Nor was his immediate predecessor, Paer, without great influence on him. All the airs of Paer's operas seem to have been present to Rossini when he composed, and these repassed through the alembic of the more powerful and original genius, the public held, to the subsequent and more beautiful forms.\*

Beyle's account of the education, or rather no education, of Rossini, is full of interest, and we have the rapid budding of the new genius with a naiveté which recalls Vasari's sketches of the early painters of Florence. Rossini's early works, as a matter of course, live only in name. Of the nine compositions, mostly operettas, given before "Tancredi," between 1810 and 1813, only three, "L'Inganno Felice," "Demetrio e Polibio," and "La Pietra del Paragone," may be said to have remained afloat during the subsequent vogue of Rossini's principal operas.†

\* A person who knew Paer told me that he always spoke with exasperation of what he called the "piracies of Rossini."

† Those whose recollections go back forty years may remember the admirable manner in which Curioni and De Begnis used to support the bass and tenor parts of "L'Inganno Felice." The principal air of the bass, written for Flippo Galli, is not easy of execution, not so much from excess of *fioriture* as from the difficulty of the management of the breath, so as to execute it in time. Rossini had not yet attained an art in which he subsequently came out as a supreme master, that of writing florid music of great effect, and at the same time easy and commodious to the singer who has obtained a fair mastery of the *solfeggio*. "La Pietra del Paragone" has been revived recently in Italy, but without success.

The first great burst of the Rossinian genius was “Tancredi,” in 1813, a period in modern history ever memorable, as if humanity had braced itself up to grand efforts in every direction. Beethoven was at the acme of his power, marked by the “Sinfonia Eroica,” and the second and more perfect form of “Fidelio.” In this year, 1813, Goethe, still vigorous, was about to close the series of his works of power in the “Wahlverwandschaften,” just as Scott in “Waverley” was about to commence, with incomparable freedom of handling, his wonderful romance series. “Childe Harold,” too, was in progress; and he who sang, the “Ariosto of the North,” was himself saluted as a poet worthy to be named with the greatest of Italians. If we pass from arts to arms, it was a struggle of giants. Moreau, returned from the New World, was about to meet, at the head of countless opposing hosts, Napoleon, the escaped from Moscow, to fall more awfully and irretrievably at Leipsic. In the west of Europe, Wellington, no longer the Fabius Cunctator of the Tagus, was about to change scene and system, and, with confident audacity, to drive fugitive legions across the Pyrenees. Such was 1813, a remarkable year in the world’s history.

To create a European reputation at such a crisis demanded a power of high order, and this Rossini achieved. “Tancredi” has not the dramatic magnificence of “Semiramide;” although agreeably instrumented, it has none of the massive orchestral *impasto* of “Les Deux Journées,” of “Fidelio,” of “Jesonda,” or of “Euryanthe;” but it is full of musical genius, full of soft enchantment and spontaneous grace, so that it at once captivated the public. Who, indeed, that has heard this opera, can forget the charm of certain pieces, such as the “Tu che accendi” of the two duets which Tancredi sings with the tenor and the soprano, and the alternate tenderness and bravura that pervades the opera?

Success of the most instantaneous and popular character rewarded the composer. Beyle writes, “From the gondolier to the greatest noble, everybody repeated ‘Mi rivedrai ti rivedro.’ Even the judges had to impose silence on the auditory at the tribunals.” A Signor Gherardi said to Beyle, “What strikes me in the music of ‘Tancredi’ is its youthfulness; everything is simple and pure; there is no luxury; it is genius in its naiveté. I like in ‘Tancredi’ certain obsolete turns in the structure of the airs; the forms familiar to Paisiello and Cimarosa are still recognisable in those long periods that captivate the attention.

In short, I like 'Tancredi' as I like the 'Rinaldo' of Tasso, because it reveals the tenderness of a great artist in his state of virgin candour." Every one who has a soul must agree with the Signor Gherardi, quoted by Beyle. The "Ah come mai quel anima" produces something of the serene ecstasy of a choice picture by a Francia or a Bellino. But this opera is seldom given now, from the difficulty of finding an adequate representative of Tancredi. This part requires a stately presence and a fine contralto voice, dramatic ability, and perfect mastery of the technical part of vocalisation; and, moreover, the physical power to sustain so much labour, for Tancred is almost never off the stage.

"Tancredi" was produced at the Fenice in the carnival of 1813, and the same summer saw the production of "L'Italiana in Algieri," at the San Benedetto of the same city. Indeed, there is nothing in musical history equal to the fertility of Rossini from 1813 to 1817. Even in the career of Mozart, a more tender genius, with a more elevated style, and more largely endowed with what one may call the harmonic instinct, there is nothing so wonderful.

"L'Italiana in Algieri" has not the fire of the "Barbière," but taken together, it is not much inferior to that great masterpiece. The airs of the tenor and the women have much of the grace of "Tancredi;" and the comic music is of the most classic character, with ample ease and freedom, an uninterrupted flow of ideas, no filling up, no patchwork, no awkward transitions or feeble passages, but the exuberant power of youthful gaiety. Beyle gives his impressions, which correspond perfectly to the vivacity of the music:—

"The result of the character of the Venetians is, that they prefer airs rather light and agreeable than impassioned; and in 'L'Italiana' they were served to their heart's content, and never did a population enjoy an entertainment more suited to their character. Travelling in Venetia, in 1817, I found 'L'Italiana' played at Brescia, Verona, Venice, Vicenza, and Treviso. It must be admitted that, in several towns, Vicenza for instance, this music was sung by wretched performers, but there was a certain exhilaration, a *verve* and a *brío*, that carried the audience with it in a way that is not usual in our colder climes of more reasoning spectators. A sort of musical folly took possession of singers, orchestra, and audience, and I partook of an amount of gaiety out of proportion to a small and mediocre theatre. In this changing spectacle nothing recalled the reality and sadness of life. Nobody dreamt in sitting in critical judgment on the performance. The singing, the decoration, the lively execution of the orchestra, the play of the actors, which was full

of improvisations, all aided the imagination of the spectator, who found himself in a different world from the actual prosaic one."

Rossini, in his subsequent career, had to combat great disadvantages, which prevented him from deriving the full harvest of fame from his works ; first, his defective musical education, and the want of a subjection to prolonged and severe contrapuntal studies ; and secondly, the Italian system of haste in the production of operas, to serve the ephemeral purposes of the theatrical seasons of Carnival, Lent, summer, and autumn. The consequence was, that the time of the composer was taken up with a multitude of operas which have not remained upon the active repertory. By dint of sheer genius he got over the defective education, as his later works can testify ; but how much greater he would have been had he started with a fund of severe contrapuntal study, and concentrated his power on a quarter of the thirty-eight or thirty-nine operas which he wrote !

Beyle describes the Italian opera system as it existed during the earlier part of the career of Rossini in a graphic and felicitous style, so as to be a curious contribution to what the Germans call the culture history of modern Italy, and which we give in a closely condensed form :—

"The impressario, often the richest patrician of a small town, takes a lease of the theatre, and forms his company of a prima-donna, a tenor, a basso-cantante, a basso-buffo, the second woman, and the third basso. He engages a composer, who fits the voices of his singers. The libretto or text is written by a poet—some unfortunate priest or abbate, who is the parasite of one of the rich houses in the place. The ridiculous part of the parasite, so well painted by Terence, is in all its glory in Lombardy, where, in the smallest town, there are several houses with an income of a hundred thousand francs a year. The impressario, who is the chief of one of those houses, gives the care of all the financial management of the theatre to some rascally lawyer, who is manager of his estates and affairs. If the impressario falls in love with the prima-donna, there is matter for the curiosity of the gossips.

"The company thus organised gives at last a first representation, after a month of burlesque intrigues, which are the general topic of conversation. This first representation is the great event of the little town, where eight or ten thousand persons discuss, during three weeks, the beauties and defects of the opera, with all their powers of attention and of lungs.

"The life of Rossini, from 1810, was passed thus :—At his arrival, he was fêted by all the dilettanti. The first fifteen or twenty days were passed in receiving dinners and looking over the libretto, the weak points of which did not escape the criticism of a composer who had some acquaintance with the poetical and dramatic literature of Italy. 'Thou

hast given me verses, and not situations,' he would say to the shabby and mud-bespattered poet, who would allege specious excuses, and two hours later bring a sonnet 'dedicated to the glory of the greatest master of Italy and the world.'

"After a fortnight of this dissipation, Rossini began to refuse dinners, and study the voices of his singers, who were often incapable of executing his music. He then composed the opera, generally rising late out of bed, and working surrounded by dilettanti, who stuck fast to him. He dined at the inn; his real work was then done in the dead of the night, and it was sometimes at three o'clock in the morning that many of his most brilliant ideas occurred to him. These he would write on little scraps of paper, without touching the piano, and to these he would give the technical form on the following day in playful conversation with his friends. The only thing that could paralyse this brilliant genius, always in creation and action, was the presence of a pedant, who would talk of his glory, and bore him with the compliments of a learned dilettante. The decisive evening arrives; the town is filled by the people from a circuit of twenty miles, who sleep in their carriages standing in the street, for all the inns are full. All the business of the town is suspended, and during the representation the town appears a desert. The opera is praised to the skies, or mercilessly hissed. These are not Parisian dilettanti interrogating the faces of their neighbours, but men seeking the triumph of their feelings by demonstrations of physical energy. At the end of the representation, during which Rossini has acted as conductor, he receives his sequins, and a farewell dinner from his friends, that is to say, the whole town, and starts on his further journey, the gayest of men."

Beyle had a taste for melody, as witness his enthusiasm for "Tancredi," but he had not an equivalent enjoyment in harmonic sonority. He conceived a taste for melody to be natural in man, just as in youth we relish luscious fruits, but in mature age we must have spiced meats and alcoholic drinks. So society progressed from 1730 to 1823, *i.e.*, from the melodic Italians to Beethoven. If the sonority of a Beethoven, a Cherubini, or a Hummel was a highly-spiced food, what would Beyle have said of the eccentricities of a Wagner and a Liszt, and the wild, strange experiments of a Berlioz? How times have altered! The sons or grandsons of those Italians who found the melodious "Flauto Magico" to be too scientific or *strepitoso*, sat out "Lohengrin" in Bologna with a tolerance which subsequently almost became admiration.

We will not follow into too great detail the succession of Rossinian works criticised by Beyle. "L'Italiana in Algeri" was followed by "Aureliano in Palmira" and "Il Turco in Italia" in 1814." "Elisabetta Regina d'Inghilterra," a grand work, the disappearance of which from the modern repertory seems

scarcely justifiable, dates from 1815. The following year, 1816, was one of supreme power, comprising “*Il Barbière*” and “*Otello*.” Beyle passes in review the unique and incomparable “*Barbière*,” with many just and as many absurd observations. The beautiful air of *Almaviva*, “*Ecco ridente*,” he finds feeble and common, but he renders full justice to the magnificent dramatic power of “*La Calunnia*.”

“*Otello*” is full of magnificent effect in depicting the pomp of public life in Venice, and with an abundance of melody and tenderness in the love passages of *Desdemona* and *Otello*. The dramatic power in the last act is the subject of universal admiration. But the overture certainly does not fitly herald the poem. Compare the vague mysterious grandeur of Cherubini’s overture to “*Les Deux Journées*” with that of “*Otello*.” Rossini also fails to render the darkness of the character of *Iago*. The prison scenes in “*Fidelio*,” the *Zamiel* music of “*Freyschütz*,” the *Bertram* music of “*Robert*,” *St Bris*’s annunciation of the *St Barthélemy* in the “*Huguenots*,” and several things in *Gluck*’s operas, are fine specimens of the sombre colouring which was wanting to the *Iago* music. Rossini does not seem to have hit this character, otherwise it would have been easy for a man of his genius to evoke from the murky spheres of the bassoon, the trombone, and the double bass a fitting colouring for an *Iago*. The *Assur* music of “*Semiramide*,” composed subsequently by Rossini himself, showed that he was a potent master of the sombre-terrible. “*Otello*” was not written in so great a hurry as some other works; but haste and hurry have spoiled much of Rossini for posterity. Beethoven would not have been half the giant he was had he written with Rossinian rapidity; and how immeasurably greater Rossini would have been had he written on the Beethoven principle of never quitting a composition until he believed it unsusceptible of further improvement!

The fundamental vulgarity that pervades the libretto of the “*Cenerentola*” produces the following hit by Beyle at the ruling foible of his nation:—

“On seeing the ‘*Cenerentola*’ on the bill, I say, like the *Marquis de Moncade*, ‘*C’est ce soir que je m’en canaille*.’ This music is deficient in the beau ideal, and constantly fixes my imagination on the misfortunes or enjoyments of vanity—on the happiness of going to a ball with fine clothes, or of being named *maitre d’hotel* by a prince. Now, having been born in France, and having inhabited it for a lengthened period, I confess that I am too tired of the disappointments of vanity, and of the gascon

character, and of the five or six hundred vaudevilles that I have heard, to enjoy a spectacle all turning on the rebuffs given to vanity. Nineteen-twentieths of society is regulated by this vulgar motive ; and without ceasing to love France, one may be a little tired of a passion that replaces all the others."

Beyle does not seem to have been present at any first nights of a Rossinian opera except that of "*La Gazza Ladra*," which was produced at Milan in 1817. Beyle calls the libretto "*un vrai drame noir et plat*,"—in short, a dark and disagreeable domestic drama, without poetical ideal, but the music comprises some of the finest things written by Rossini, and is all through vigorous and well sustained. Beyle writes, "I was at the first representation of '*La Gazza Ladra*.' It was one of the most unanimous and brilliant successes which I ever witnessed, and had a run of three months." Beyle accounts for the extravagant demonstrations of *furore* in an Italian reception of a piece in the following manner:—"A Parisian during the day has a hundred incidents which use up his stock of emotion, whereas the Italian, who has had ennui all day in a town where there have been no events, comes in the evening to the theatre with such a freshness of mind and attention that nothing escapes him. For him, a new opera, if good, is a historical event." Indeed, in those times of Carbonarism, prudence suggested that, like Mr Dangle, he should "hate all politics but theatrical politics." How little that Italy of Beyle was like the Italy of our day, the reader requires not to be told.

There is much tender music in "*La Gazza Ladra*," and some very characteristic dramatic music ; witness the air of the "*Po-detà*," which is not one whit inferior to "*La Calunnia*;" and there is also a fine sprinkling of martial bravura in the earlier part of the opera, but there is no grandeur, or room for it. On the contrary, in the "*Mosé*," which was given at Naples in the beginning of 1818, Rossini has ample scope for showing the latter quality. But Beyle approaches this solemn stage oratorio as an eighteenth century freethinker, from the ridiculous side.

"The piece begins with the plague of darkness—a plague easy to execute on the stage by lowering the footlights, and veiling the lustre. The Egyptians, at the drawing up of the curtain, were afflicted with the plague of the extinguisher."

The opera was well received, but the machine of the third act for the passage of the Red Sea produced laughter, and had an effect the opposite of what was intended. It was this failure



that gave rise to the celebrated *preghiera*, "Del tuo stellato soglio," the simple grandeur of which has not been surpassed by Rossini in any of his other compositions, and which rises to the elevation of Handel and Haydn.

"One of my friends," writes Beyle, "went to Rossini, who was taking it easy in bed at midday, giving audience to twenty acquaintances, when, to the amusement of the society, there burst into the room the poet Totola, who cries out, 'Maestro, I have saved the third act. I have made a prayer for the Egyptians crossing the Red Sea.' On which he pulled out of his pocket a number of papers, saying, 'Maestro, it is the work of an hour.' 'Well,' said Rossini, 'if it has taken you an hour to write this prayer, I will write you the music of it in a quarter of an hour.' Rossini then leaped out of bed, sat down at a table in his shirt, and composed the music of the prayer of 'Mosé' in eight or ten minutes, without the piano, the conversation continuing in a loud voice as usual. On the following day at the theatre, people expected the usual laugh, but when Moses began a new air,

'Del tuo stellato soglio,'

followed by the chorus, the theatre seemed ready to fall from the thunder of applause that ensued; the spectators rose in their boxes, calling aloud, 'Bello, bello! che bello!'

"Mosé" was given in the Lent of 1818, and then followed a temporary decline of the power of Rossini, but still marked by a work of eminence about once a year, such as "La Donna del Lago" in 1819, "Maometto Secondo" in 1820, "Matilda di Sciabran" in 1821; and then followed the visit to Vienna, which had so important results in forming his fourth manner. The first manner may be considered the immature productions previous to "Tancredi." "Tancredi" and "L'Italiana in Algeri," as already described, with their strong remainder of the Paisiello-Cimarosa impress, may be considered his second manner. In "Barbière," "Otello," and "Gazza Ladra," we see the completely formed and distinctive Rossinian manner. The fourth manner dates from the visit to Vienna, and the familiarity with "Fidelio" and other great works of the German repertory, the fruit of which was seen in "Semiramide." I conceive "Zelmira," produced at the San Carlo of Naples in the carnival of 1822, and repeated by Rossini himself at Vienna, to be the transition from the third to the fourth manner. "Zelmira" was a work of fine inspiration,

and of sound and careful composition, entirely free from those traces of haste and superficiality observable in many of his earlier compositions. There are in "Zelmira" strains of tenderness and peculiarities of rhythm, transition, and modulation that show Rossini to have been drinking at the Beethoven fountain of chamber music.

"Semiramide" is ("Tell" excepted) the greatest and best of the serious operas of Rossini, but Beyle's superficial judgment of it may be pronounced one of his *fiascos*. Rossini's visit to Vienna in 1822, when he had an opportunity of hearing the operas of Gluck and Mozart, the "Fidelio" of Beethoven, and the first Vienna run of "Freischütz" at the Kärnthner Thor, had given a depth and earnestness to his style, and a solidity to his orchestral score, which constituted a revival after four years of rather a decline in inspiration. "Semiramide," which is certainly destined to be one of Rossini's best passports to posterity, is thus misjudged by Beyle—

"The degree of Germanism of 'Zelmira' is nothing in comparison with that of 'Semiramide,' which Rossini has given at Venice in 1823. It seems to me that Rossini has committed an error of geography. This opera, which at Venice has escaped hisses only by reason of the great name of Rossini, might have been composed at Königsberg or at Berlin. I easily console myself for not having seen it at the theatre; those parts of it which I have heard sung to the pianoforte give me no pleasure!"

The Venetians, who had been excited to enthusiasm by "Tancredi," were as unjust at the beginning of "Semiramide" as Beyle was. It appears to be so with other works and other audiences. "Guillaume Tell," now so high in popularity, had for seven long years, from 1829 to 1836, no more than a success of esteem. The Milanese, who had clamorously applauded the "Pirata," received "Norma" so coolly that Bellini wrote in despair to his friends of the South, that he was sure that he had not merited such a fall.

"Semiramide" has a defective libretto, for the two women are too much on the stage, and a certain monotony arises from their being almost never out of sight, and from the excess of work given them to perform; but the tide of thoroughly Rossinian melody is full and flowing from beginning to end, so that the auditor forgets that the libretto is written by a poet who had not M. Scribe's admirable art of relieving personages and scenes by each other in such a way as to dispel all weariness.

Probably, when Beyle came to know the work better, he changed his mind, but in the eighteen years that elapsed between the publication of the "Vie de Rossini" and Beyle's death, the biographer should certainly have sought some opportunity of addition or correction that would have done some justice to the music of "Semiramide."

The Parisian career of Rossini is also omitted by Beyle, although it included a resetting of "Maometto Secondo" under the name of the "Siege of Corinth," a work characterised by *grandezza* that was worthy to follow "Semiramide" and to herald "Tell," and to which the general public has to this day not done the justice which it merits. Another of the great Parisian works was the enlarged version of "Mosé," followed by the charming "Comte Ory," abounding in musical arabesques of the most delicate tracery ; and lastly, "Guillaume Tell," on which it would be superfluous to say one word, so universal is its recognition by both the general and the select public ; and the same may be said of the "Stabat Mater."

In conclusion, if Beyle's book is not a complete Life of Rossini, it is a most amusing and interesting account of Italian musical culture, both before Rossini, and during the purely Italian career of this greatest master of the school to which he belonged.

*"Promenades dans Rome."*

The pith of this work is in its analysis of the diversities of the Italian character. Beyle shows with felicity how the eyes of travellers and historians, being fixed on important interests and on the main current of events, the result is that they fail to catch the minor distinctions of manners and disposition. He maintains that in Italy, with its seven or eight centres of civilisation, the most ordinary thing is done differently in each. Venice is full of gaiety in spite of its misfortunes ; Turin had a bilious aristocracy ; Milan was good-natured ; Genoa greedy of gain, where, if you wish to enjoy consideration, you must spend only the fourth of your income ; the Bolognese is full of fire, passion, generosity, and even of imprudence ; while at Florence people are prudent and logical, free from sentimental love, but not from sensual pleasure. Deep and abiding passions reside in Rome, but the Neapolitan is the slave of the sensations of the moment. Nowhere are there people more opposite than those of Florence and Naples. Long before the Roman conquests each district of

Italy had different or inimical populations. When Rome fell they regained their separate or municipal existence, and hence the perpetuation of these differences and distinctions.

Such may be pronounced to be a close condensation of the theories of Beyle relating to this subject, which agree substantially with the well-known opinions of M. Guizot and other eminent writers on the composition and decomposition of that colossal agglomeration of states and towns called the Roman Empire.

Italy has once more her capital in Rome, and, with the modern facility of communication, it seems not to be a hazardous proposition to say, that a uniformity of manners and character such as never previously existed must gradually supervene, although the south must long remain in its semi-barbarous separation from the centre and north. Beyle admits that these differences do not hold good with the wealthy and educated classes, who are much the same everywhere, but with regard to the fundamental differences between the populations of the southern and those of the northern half of Italy they are numerous.

The inhabitants of the city of Rome are mocking and satirical, according to Beyle ; inhospitable and ill-natured according to the late Lord Dudley and Ward, an acute and refined observer so long as he was in possession of his reason. But it must be remembered that Rome is a confluence of the rank, wealth, and talent of all the countries of Europe ; it would therefore be too much to expect of the Romans to occupy themselves much with foreigners except to make money out of them : those who are not engaged in the pursuit of lucre are so overrun by distinguished foreigners that a *nil admirari* indifference is inevitable.

That the Neapolitan territory was no less the inveterate seat of brigands is known to every newspaper reader. An ex-prefect of Murat told Beyle that a Calabrian proposed to him in the coolest manner possible to assassinate an individual who was known to be obnoxious to the authorities. Beyle adds, that in the time of the Guises this was also the morality of Paris, as it was that of Naples itself only half a century before Beyle's time.

The same prefect mentioned that a man said, "The highroad produces nothing, otherwise I should have paid the thirteen ducats which I owe to the treasury." "Remark," adds Beyle, "if you wish to understand the contemporaries of Cimarosa, that this man has not the notion that he legally owes thirteen ducats to the king for justice and a good administration. He looks on the king as a fortunate and powerful being, who disposes of the

capacity to extort the thirteen ducats, and the right of the king seems to be the same sort of thing as his right to the product of the highroad might be. Such a people does not fight for honour. He will fight to revenge himself on his enemy, or for St Januarius, but not for the king."

Railways will gradually alter the manners and ideas of the Neapolitan population, and a generation hence people will talk of Fra Diavolo and the Varderelli as our fathers talked of Dick Turpin and other heroes of Bagshot, Newgate, and Tyburn.

In this book some of the historical and literary portraits are painted with knowledge and taste, so as to carry the reader along with the author. He is very full on the central figure of the cinque-cento group—Leo X., who was elected to the Papal throne at a time when the Italian revival was in the plenitude of its splendour, and when all branches of art were represented by men of eminent genius. He found in the arts Michael Angelo, Raphael, Leonardo da Vinci, Correggio, and Titian, while letters were adorned by Ariosto, Machiavelli, and Guicciardini. Nor was the age without its jester, Pietro Aretino, who, according to Beyle, undertook to say disagreeable truths, and being the incarnation of the opposition, was counted infamous. But surely his notorious and disreputable work must be counted as having given, even in that lax age, some ground for severe critical judgments on the man who wrote such a book.

An extract from Beyle's sketch of Leo will not be read without interest. "Leo X. had the lively sensibility of an artist, and, moreover, he knew how to procure himself a vivid enjoyment of life, which was a subject of anger for the melancholy pedants. This Pope went to the chase, and his banquets were enlivened by the presence of buffoons or jesters, who were then not yet banished from courts. Far from affecting a tiresome dignity, he sometimes mystified the vain fools around him, so that grave historians have raised their voices against him. The morals of this Pope were neither more pure nor more scandalous than those of the other grand seigniors of that period. We must remember that, from the appearance of Luther, public decorum made a long stride every fifty years. Rome was full of gaiety and good-humour, and Leo wished to see merry faces around him. No military pedantry ever spoiled that court, than which nothing more amiable ever existed."

That he was a jovial temporal sovereign of Rome cannot be denied; his very face was the incarnation of jollity; but as a

Pontifex Maximus of the Western Church, no man can say that he was "the right man in the right place." Beyle was a thorough epicurean; not merely the austerity of a puritanical Calvinist or of a Jesuit repels him, but for even the poetry of the religious instinct he had no sense whatsoever, and the want of recognition of this feeling, which predominates in the heart of so many of the human race, denotes a certain narrowness which is the reproach of all mere materialists and positivists.\*

There are many pages on the cinque-cento men in this work. I content myself with the following few words on Tasso:—

"What a divine poet when he forgets to imitate! What tenderness, what soldierly melancholy! *that* is the sublime of chivalry. How these verses are near our hearts, and estrange us from the dry malignant old heroes of Homer! I have arranged a copy of the 'Gerusalemme' for my own use, erasing all the pure conceits and ingenious locutions, which made the fortune of the work on its first appearance in 1581."

Now the Pope is extinguished as a temporal sovereign, happily not only for Italy, but for himself as an individual, and as Supreme Pontiff of the Western Church (for in these latter days he was "the mere picture of a king," and the mere caricature of an Italian sovereign), it is not uninteresting to look back to what this anomalous temporal rule was in its decline, for in such a state it certainly has been since the great French Revolution at least, if not since the palmy days of the cinque-cento.

"This sovereign," says Beyle, "has not been a prince during his youth. During the first fifty years of his life he has paid court to personages more powerful than himself, and in general he only begins business at an age when people generally retire, that is to say, about seventy years of age. A courtier of the Pope may always aspire to succeed his master, which is not the case in other courts. A courtier in Rome seeks not only to please the Pope as a German chamberlain seeks to please his master; he seeks also to obtain his benediction, for the Pope

\* Certainly the phenomena of conscience cannot be explained solely by a knowledge of the physical laws. On the other hand, a psychology that would ignore the ascertained in physiology is a mere useless mental gymnastic. Let us applaud, therefore, those biologists who are exploring the whole of the border-land disputed by the combatants. This or that theological teacher may become obsolete, but science must be a gainer, and religious sentiment, which, like hope, "springs eternal in the human breast," will certainly be no loser at the close of the struggle.

can procure the eternal happiness of his chamberlain by an indulgence in *articulo mortis*."

We will not follow Beyle through his descriptions of the public monuments of this empire city. Some generations hence, when Rome will be one of the busy European centres of population, wealth, civilisation, commerce, and industry, Beyle's book will have a historical interest as the description of a period when grass grew in the streets, when prelates ruled where Cæsars and Pretorians had held sway; when the Campagna was almost a desert, abandoned to cattle, sheep, and barbarous shepherds; and when the Sabine hills were not free from the occasional visits of the professional brigand.

Some persons may say that we are too easily supposing a future very different from the present; but we must be blind not to see that an economical revolution is about to supervene in Italy as remarkable as the political one. The great stores of Italian capital, hitherto dormant and locked up, will not fail to be actively employed, now that institutions of credit have become abundant in every part of the peninsula. A generation hence, the Campagna of Rome, when drained, will wave with yellow corn, or be verdant with the olive, the vine, and the mulberry; and the Sabine woods will gleam with countless villas, where wealth, comfort, and civilisation will take the place of ignorance, barbarism, and insecurity.

*"Mémoires d'un Touriste."*

The materials of this work were collected during a tour through almost all parts of France, at the time of his long leave of absence after 1836. The book was intended to be a French pendant to his labours on Italian society. The author professes to be a commercial traveller for some establishment of iron industry, and the sudden jerks from high politics, high art, and the philosophy of history, to pretended details and circumstances such as might occur to or environ an ironmonger's commercial traveller, have a rather comic effect upon the reader. There is no attempt at the plodding, continuous, and successful plausibility of De Foe. The reader is aware that the author laughs in his sleeve at him, and at the whole human race.

"Les Mémoires d'un Touriste" is, as a whole, below the level of "Rome, Naples, et Florence," and of the "Promenades in Rome." Now this is not surprising, because there is not in

provincial France the glorious stuff for an artistic and literary tourist there is in the historic capitals of varied and beautiful Italy. Colomb admits that this book was only a "half success." Nevertheless there are many passages scattered through the work in which the author's acute observation and pleasant humour break out as of old; and the work has one quality that cannot be disputed—complete independence of many French prejudices; in fact, one of the causes of the "half success" of the work was the unmerciful manner in which he smote the vanity, inconstancy, and other foibles of this brilliant, but in many respects kind and amiable race.

To an ethnologist and topographer of France the lights and shadows of the provincial character are highly instructive. The mercurial Provençal; the Gascon, with that mixture of amiability, fluent prattle, and exaggeration which the French denominate *blague*; the retrograde, superstitious Breton; Paris, with its vast crater of pure egotism, contrasted with the average good-hearted Frenchman of the provinces; and last, not least, beyond the limits of France, but having French for his vernacular tongue, the austere, cool-blooded, prudent, and calculating Genevese—all furnish abundant stuff for reflection to whosoever takes the trouble to read through the book with attention. Hegel used to say that the perusal of a romance of Jean Paul was a "horse labour;" but he admitted that the re-perusal of select pencil-marked passages gave him vivid enjoyment. Having, after repeated perusals of the "*Mémoires d'un Touriste*," followed Hegel's plan, we proceed to give some decoctions of this very curious production.

Beyle divides France into several groups of departments, each different, but all resembling in certain human foibles. For instance, everywhere the wife of a small functionary is proud of having been invited to the ball of M. le Prefect, and almost dislikes her friends of early youth who have not received this distinction.

According to Beyle, Alsace and Lorraine were the sincere provinces of France, serious in their affections, and with ardent (French) patriotism. Little did Beyle imagine that a brief but tremendous war was to restore to the German Fatherland those two provinces, which, although still speaking the German tongue, and having all the essentials of the German character, have, in the course of two centuries of alienation from the parent stock, become completely French in their sentiments and attachments!



Certainly the future moral and political history of these provinces will be replete with interest to the ethnologist. There are the old German historical associations, the old German tongue, and universal German nomenclature. The conqueror has certainly in these great advantages, if he gains sufficient time to give the future generation the impress of German education ; but it seems probable that the power to do this must be fought out, at least once, if not more than once, on fields not less sanguinary than those of Gravelotte and Sedan.

Paris, with its vast circle of egotism, is, according to Beyle, the place most opposed to Alsace and its independent inhabitants ; for Paris is the place of the congregation of all the people who seek to turn the Government to account for their private purposes. We may ask what capital does not see the rush of place-hunters putting in practice the maxims of “*Le Moyen de Parvenir?*” The reader may remember one of the pleasant vaudevilles of M. Scribe, “*Le Solliciteur,*” who, displaying the calf of his leg in days when people wore tights, was persuaded that he had “*une jambe à succes,*” a sort of self-gratulation unintelligible among people wearing trousers.

Bretagne and the west is still centuries behind, according to Beyle, *i.e.*, still devout in a retrograde Catholicism, and under priestcraft. Beyle relates that in one place it is the custom for rheumatic people to throw so much wool at the foot of the patron saint ; but as the sick are separated by a railing from the sanctuary, the wool must necessarily be big enough in order to reach the feet of the saint. This simple Celtic population, who to this day wear a costume of the seventeenth century, are a complete contrast to the neighbouring Normans, who are an acute and cunning people, never giving a direct answer to a question ; but notwithstanding this defect, Beyle considers Normandy to be the most advanced of all the French provinces in civilisation. With the capital on one hand and the sea on the other, and intersected by a navigable river, this ceases to be a riddle.

In the south, the Provençal is frank even to rudeness and fanaticism. The south produced the most ardent republicans of 1793 ; and in 1815 there was the massacre of Marshal Brune from opposite motives. There is still gallantry in Languedoc, according to Beyle ; and Gascony is the happy country where people paint themselves in rosy colours, and have no sort of doubt of their excellence and capacity. But it is a country of

soldiers, as the names of Lannes, Soult, Murat, Bernadotte, and others prove. If there is little instruction in this part of France, and if crimes against the person abound, there is at the same time great natural intelligence ; but vanity is the curse of the country. Poor men have the rage for buying land with borrowed money ; the house becomes a chateau, and then these people pass themselves off as large proprietors, and end with believing it.

In the race for fortune and distinction in Paris, the man of the north beats the southerner, not in hard work, but in the prudence which commands success. The southerner, swayed by his passions, has no chance with the self-command of a northerner. When a man of the south has at the age of fifty arrived at fortune, it is by sheer work, but to the man of the north hard work is only one of the elements of success. These views of Beyle are in many respects just, but, as a matter of course, admit of numerous exceptions.

Provincials in general, with their foibles and peculiarities, occupy much of Beyle's attention ; and the reader is often reminded of the exaggeration of style, the comic solemnity, and airs of importance of vain and ambitious provincials so minutely and successfully depicted by Balzac. Personal matters, stale to the Parisians, are the most interesting subjects of conversation in a provincial soiree. If a great artist in Paris has five children, the gossiping quidnunc of a provincial town gives him eight, and is proud of being so accurately informed. If a minister has half a million of francs, the knowing provincial, with an air of mystery, can guarantee its being two millions. These considerations of Beyle constitute most pleasant reading ; at the same time the new modes of communication by rail and telegraph have so enormously increased, that the remotest provinces have almost ceased to be provincial as the term was understood in Beyle's time.

There is much political matter in the book, illustrative not only of the period of the journey, which was that of Louis Philippe, but also of the First Empire and the Restoration. He reproves the unfortunate thirst for enjoyment, and for making a sudden fortune, which turns the heads of so many of the youth of France. " They saw a lieutenant of artillery become emperor ; the son of an innkeeper become king of Naples ; a working hatter become marshal of France ; a tutor in a noble family become a peer of France and a millionaire : the youth cannot understand that history does not repeat itself, and that in 1837

the age of Carnot and Dumouriez could not begin over again.” This view Beyle illustrated by a neat and felicitous image. “A torrent precipitates itself from a mountain into a plain by a magnificent cascade; half a league farther on people would like to see another cascade, but the torrent is now a river in the plain, and a new cascade is impossible.” Could Beyle have followed the stream of time to 1848 and 1870, he would have found the soil of France to be more volcanic, and its cascade formation somewhat more abrupt and rugged, than he imagined during the pacific sway of the citizen-king.

A visit to the environs of Geneva necessarily brings Voltaire on the *tapis*, and Beyle considered that the Chateau de Ferney was strategically a skilfully chosen post, for in fifty minutes he could be in a free country, and in a few hours, if he chose, in Prussia, *i.e.*, Neuchâtel. Beyle pays a high tribute not only to the genius but to the moral courage of Voltaire, and considers that, under a legal and constitutional Government, it is not easy to estimate sufficiently the amount of moral and physical courage that Voltaire displayed in the Calas and Labarre cases, exposed as he was to the hatred of all the great incorporations of an absolute monarchy. Setting aside all admiration of his genius and erudition, Beyle maintains that he was the most courageous man of his age.

French Switzerland, in the neighbourhood of his native Grenoble, speaks, it is true, the language of France; but the Genevese, as Protestants and as sturdy republicans (not episodical ones), do not think and act as Frenchmen. Beyle has studied them well, and his observations, which I closely condense, are not without some piquancy.

Beyle considers that the Genevese are naturally great financiers, because they are great economists. They have the virtue of spending less than they gain, and in youth their pleasure is to think that one day they will be rich. Even when they commit an imprudence, and give themselves up to pleasure, they choose something cheap and rural, such as the ascent of a hill to drink milk. The Genevese is essentially anti-French in character. He hates French frivolity and looseness, however gilded by wit. He regards Gil Blas as a most immoral book. Voltaire was a man perfectly calculated to inspire a Genevese with horror. Half of the French literature is in a sense contrary to the Genevese taste. We may say that the French character in general, which is gay, satirical, libertine, and yet chivalrous, repels them; but

heavy didactic writers are quite to their taste. And Beyle thinks that the despots of Europe ought to have rich Genevese of fifty years of age for their ministers of finance, because these austere unseducible logicians, with their severe probity, would have the courage to close the purse-strings and say No to even the despots themselves.

The Genevese have a mode of treating money matters that is precise, punctual, and inexorable. "You conclude a matter of thirty thousand francs with them in the most prompt and honourable manner. Ten years afterwards, you renew business relations with them, and they remind you that on the previous transaction you omitted the postage of seven sous."

The solid character of the Genevese literature is characterised by Beyle with his usual felicity of style.

"In literature, the Genevese style is correspondingly heavy. We see a team of oxen that labours heavily along, but there is substance with this heaviness; and the Genevese may say with Boileau—

'Mais mon vers bien ou mal dit toujours quelque chose.'

"The Genevese knows Montesquieu and Adam Smith, and reads the five or six most solid books that have appeared in Europe during the year, whether at Paris, London, Berlin, or Pavia, for they are linguists. The pedantry of the savants of Paris consists of a courtesy of measured propositions and smiles of eternal satisfaction. Those gentlemen give you to understand, with the most exquisite politeness, that a discovery, which we suppose has been made, is impossible or is obsolete; on the contrary, a resident of Geneva shines by his powers of memory, but in his manner is a laughable caricature."

So judges Beyle; but I have a strong suspicion that the French Swiss are not a pure French race, but a German race over whom the French language has ultimately predominated, but without a change of fundamental structure of the national character. The rigid Calvinism has kept it more austere than in Germany proper, still the sum of solid qualities makes it respectable. Beyle had the intelligence to understand, but not the temperament or sympathetic imagination to appreciate, such a character. The Gallic qualities of gaiety, brilliant garrulity, sensibility, inconstancy, amiability, and irreflection, are wanting to the Genevese. Their prudence is proverbial. The Duke de Choiseul used to say, "If you see a Genevese throw himself out of a window, throw

yourself without hesitation after him ; you will be sure to find yourself somehow ten per cent. the better for it.”

Notices of various French literary and historical characters, apropos of different localities, vary in an agreeable manner the topographical details of the “Mémoires d'un Touriste.” The cutlers' shops of Langres recall Diderot and his well-known peculiarities—

“No doubt,” says Beyle, “this writer has too much emphasis, but it was not, like that of many modern writers, from poverty of ideas.” But Beyle admits that Diderot's style shocks those who feel Mozart and Correggio.

At Rouen, Beyle dislikes the *furibond* statue of Corneille. His notice of this vigorous genius, although existing in the original manuscript, was held back by the author at the first printing of the work, but is restored in the posthumous editions. His satire on Napoleon I. was no doubt the motive of the author's suppression.

“Corneille was simple, modest, and great ; his heart was made for true glory, and when menaced in indigence with high protection, he dared to print this line—

‘Je ne dois qu'à moi seul toute ma renommée.’

“The age changed before his eyes ; the French *citizen* of the Ligne became the commonplace *subject* of the absolute monarchy. Corneille's robust heroes were considered rude in comparison with those of Racine, and in the eyes of an absolute monarch Racine was superior to Corneille. The toady Boileau had the impudence, in the old age of Corneille, to print the diatribe—

‘Après l'Agesilas,  
Hélas !  
Mais après l'Attilæ,  
Holà !’

“At length came Napoleon, who said one day, ‘If Corneille had lived in my time, I would have made him a prince.’ ‘You would have done no such thing,’” says Beyle, apostrophising the imperial would-be patron. “‘Your minister of police, on the first appearance of one of Corneille's freespoken tragedies, would have packed him off to Brest, conducted from brigade to brigade by your gendarmerie.’”

Traits of eccentric character occur occasionally in the “Mémoires d'un Touriste.” There is a picturesque flavour of “Gil Blas” in the following sketch of the philanthropic Vida, who complacently allowed the pickpockets from time to time to filch

his pocket-handkerchiefs. But one morning his valet took the precaution to stitch the handkerchief to the pocket. Vida went out, and felt a vigorous twitch at his handkerchief. "My friend, it is sewed to-day," said he to the pickpocket, without turning his head; "but I am on my way to church, and will pray for your conversion." We may, however, doubt if the spiritual compensation was properly appreciated."

The "*Mémoires d'un Touriste*" show less literary power than the Italian sketches, but here and there acute observation and a light Gallic humour remind us that they are by the same hand. It was written before railways had become general in France, and the frequent mention of horse conveyances going slowly over limited distances has an odd effect on the reader, and in some respects gives the book a modern-antique air. But it abounds in matter of permanent value, illustrative of French character in the various provinces of this prominent European state.

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### MINOR TALES.

Of the minor tales of Beyle, perhaps the most generally known are the "*Chroniques Italiennes*," but to me they are not particularly pleasing, being neither truth nor fiction. They are deficient in the naïveté of authentic narrative, and have not the art and development which Manzoni displayed so splendidly in his well-known historical romance—a sphere of literature in which Grossi, Guerazzi, and Azeglio have also taken high places. That which Beyle perhaps might have done would have been a picture of a whole period, such as that of Leo X. or Lorenzo di Medici, in the pleasant gossiping manner of Louisa Mühlbach. This would have been full of interest and historical knowledge, and, with the occasional traits of genius which could not fail in a work of Beyle, would no doubt have done more for his reputation than those scattered fragments. But the poor man was often ruled by the necessities of the day, and the *Revue des Deux Mondes* and the *Revue de Paris* were a ready resource for the writer who could not always await the success of a larger work.

The number of these minor tales exceeds a dozen, including a

couple of unfinished ones. Of these minor works, one, as already mentioned, gave every promise of being a masterpiece. This is "Le Chasseur Vert." This little book is a masterly picture of French regimental life, and of provincial town society in France, with its endless envies, hatreds, and jealousies. In England, nobility are, not only by rank, but, generally speaking, by their possessions, much above the leading inhabitants of provincial towns; but in France, where the merely gentleman class enjoying the *particule* look on themselves as nobility, there are two distinctly defined societies, and not, as with us, an imperceptible junction of each caste with the one above it by gradual ascent. "Le Chasseur Vert" does not extend much above a couple of hundred pages, but the reader who arrives at the point where the unfinished tale suddenly breaks off, has a feeling of regret and disappointment, as if interrupted in one of the masterly delineations of one of the classic writers of the novel of modern society.

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### UNPUBLISHED WORKS OF BEYLE.

The unpublished works of Beyle are in the Museum of Grenoble, in the shape of legible and intelligible manuscript, and much that is illegible or unintelligible. Having passed his youth during the Reign of Terror, and his manhood partly under the absolute government of the First Empire and partly in Milan during the first period of the Austrian occupation, and when the great European combat between representative forms and personal government was as yet undecided, he surrounded himself with a thousand precautions, and the consequence was, that in addition to his inherently enigmatical nature, his rough draughts on all that related to politics or society were full of riddles, concealments, and half meanings, and many of his annotations were in ungrammatical English.

One of the most curious of these works is the "Vie de César," which is a voluminous memoir of Napoleon I. The first volume of this book has an English superscription, "Made 11th November 1836," and then in French, "Mémoires sur Napoleon."

"Fu vera gloria ?  
Ai posteri l'ardua sentenza."

After this quotation from Manzoni, he adds a note of his own, which the reader will no doubt thank me for giving in the original French :—

“Il voulut donner au monde une nouvelle édition de la monarchie, les k (kings, I suppose) ne voulant pas accepter ; tant mieux pour le peu ; cette gaucherie leur a valu la liberté de la presse.”

The volume is, in this spirit, a curious compound of the democratic and the Bonapartist. The second volume begins quite as curiously. One sees that the private writer and the servant of Louis Philippe's government were in secret conflict in the brain of this singular character.

“À *Messieurs de la Police.*”

“MESSIEURS.—On ne parle ici que de choses arrivées avant la mort de Napoleon, Mai 1822. Rien absolument n'est relatif à ce qui s'est passé depuis 1830. Plusieurs chapitres furent écrits vers 1826 on cite souvent les ‘Mémoires de Napoleon’ et M. de Lascazes Style de ce livre : Jamais MM. Marchangy ou Salvandy.”

The intention no doubt was, that had this book fallen under the Argus eyes of the French police, they were given to understand that, although Beyle was half Bonapartist and half democrat, he had no intention of quarrelling with his bread and butter. M. Marchangy was that pompous and perfectly honest legal functionary of the Restoration who was so obnoxious to the advanced Liberals of that period. M. de Salvandy was the well-known adulator of Louis Philippe, who had a spurious grandiloquence of the Chateaubriand sort, but without Chateaubriand's genius ; but, with the exception of his absurd adulation of the seat of power, he was not without considerable claims to esteem, either as a man of letters or as a private individual. There was much pure gold in Chateaubriand ; the Salvandys and Marchangys abounded in pinchbeck.

In the third volume I find a project of a preface, which runs thus :—“From 1806 to 1814 I lived in a society which was chiefly occupied with the acts of the Emperor. During a part of this time I was attached to the court of this great man, and I saw him twice or thrice a week.”

“*Variantes*” (another version of the preface).

“In reading ancient history, the young heart susceptible of



enthusiasm, attaches itself to the Romans, and deploras their defects, and all this in spite of their injustice and tyranny to their allies. It is impossible to admire another general after having seen Napoleon at work. There is always something hypocritical, exaggerated, and cockneyfied which kills the rising inclination. The admiration of Napoleon is the only passion which remains to me, and does not hinder me from seeing the defects of his mind, and the miserable weakness that may be imputed to him."

In another sketch of the preface he says, that "the art of telling lies may be beautifully concealed by academic elegance of style, and that he will purposely chose a style that is inelegant; that he had the advantage of living in the intimacy of the grand-marshal of the palace, Duroc, and of Count Daru; and that after the campaign of 1796 he had gone over the battle-fields of Napoleon's Italian campaigns with soldiers who had been present at the battles." He adds that the work was begun in 1816, when he was in the habit of hearing Napoleon called "Monsieur de Bonaparte."

A fourth variety of preface is the following:—

"A man who has had the opportunity to see Napoleon at St Cloud, at Marengo, and Moscow, now writes his life, without pretending to a fine style. This man detests emphasis, which is the cousin-german of hypocrisy, the vice in fashion in the nineteenth century."

We see in these extracts that although Beyle did not polish his form, he gave a free course to his mind in putting together all the material that occurred to him; and in spite of all his contempt for sentence-balancers, he did not despise Boileau's maxim of putting the work twenty times on the frame. A preface is an advertisement, and we see that Beyle did not disdain to make a plausible first appearance to the reader. But let us not be too severe; greater men than Beyle have studied and re-studied their prefaces. Mozart composed mentally three overtures to "Don Juan," and Beethoven not only planned, but executed, four overtures to "Fidelio." This book is fairly and clearly copied out, and I wonder how it has not been published. The idiosyncracies of Beyle would not signify, be the government of France Bourbon, Bonapartist, or Republican. It would surely prove interesting reading to the countless admirers of Beyle.

I have also advised the family of Beyle to stir in the matter of the publication of the second volume of the "*Histoire de la*

Peinture en Italie." It unfortunately has many vacuities left open for subsequent research, but what does exist is clearly copied out. Not only are Giorgioni, Titian, &c., &c., fully treated, but there is much about Ricci, Belotti, Rosalba Carrera, and others of a period subsequent to the classic era, which one would like to know more about. Beyle would certainly be enjoyable after the comparative dryness of Ridolfi.

The most curious of all Beyle's unpublished MS. is certainly the autobiographical sketch already mentioned in the course of this work, and which is executed in the manner of Goethe's "Dichtung und Wahrheit;" in short, a somewhat idealised autobiography. The clean copy of this work is supposed to have been consigned either to a M. Constantin, painter, or to a Dr Prevost. The rough draught of this work, in the library of Grenoble, is declared by the experts to be illegible and unintelligible, still I could, with some effort, make out the following:—

"*Henri Brulard*: Life of an Admirer of Italian Art, with prints of celebrated pictures."

In the second part of the life of Henri Brulard is the following heading:—

"This is a sort of memoir of what happened to him during what he calls his last trip to Paris, from the 21st June 1821 to the 6th of November 1830, when he went to Trieste in the capacity of French consul." The superscription, almost indecipherable, runs thus, as far as I could make it out:—"I bequeath this examination to M. Abraham Constantin, celebrated painter, under condition of his not giving it to any printer until ten years after my death." Then follows "*Souvenirs de l'Egoïsme*."

Notwithstanding the mixture of curiosity and painful effort with which I followed these lines, I made out that he had three thousand five hundred francs in money when he left Milan; but I have not mentioned it in the biography, because I do not know whether it refers to the real Beyle or the imaginary Brulard.

There is another manuscript, the body of which is equally difficult to make out, and which I suspect to have been the foundation of the first part of Brulard—the life of an admirer of Italian art. It is superscribed with clearness in English—"A Journal of a Tour to Venezia and Padova, June 1815."

There is a good deal of criticism of Giorgioni and Titian, and some notices, real or imaginary, of a sentimental relation with

an English lady whom he met at hotels. Altogether I give up Brulard. But I think that something more might have been made of one of Beyle's very best performances; I mean that novel which escapes our grasp under its elastic quadruple nomenclature of "Le Chasseur Vert," "Leuven," "L'Orange de Malte," or "Le Bois de Prémol." I found on this manuscript an annotation, signed by M. Colomb, mentioning that it was a portraiture of personages of the society of Dauphiné, with the scene removed to Paris and Nancy.



## APPENDIX.

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### I.—POSTHUMOUS APPRECIATIONS OF BEYLE BY HIS CONTEMPORARIES.

BEYLE was scarcely consigned to his last resting-place when various eulogistic notices of him appeared in the public prints.

In the *National* of 1st April 1842 (which was at that time the organ of the Republican party which made the Revolutions of 1830 and 1848, for the benefit, as it turned out in the sequel, first of the House of Orleans and then of the House of Bonaparte), there appeared an article, signed "Old Nick," which appreciated the freethinking rather than the literary side of Beyle, and pronounced him to be the only man living whom Diderot would have shaken by the hand.

In the *Courier Français* of the 6th April 1842, Paul Merruau declares him most amiable in personal intercourse—

"What a witty and instructive talker Beyle was! He interested you even in favour of his paradoxes; he knew how to draw you over to the ground of his sympathies in spite of your tastes and inclinations; he delights you with descriptions of music that you do not appreciate; he would describe wines to fascinate a water-drinker."

Balzac, writing on the 30th January 1846 privately to Beyle's executor, says—

"Beyle was one of the most remarkable spirits [or intelligences—the word used is *ésprits*] of our time, but he did not care sufficiently for the form. He wrote as the birds sing; and our language is a sort of Madame Honesta, who finds nothing good but what is irreproachable; to use the jargon of art in sculpture, 'carefully chiselled,' or in painting, '*leché*.' I was much chagrined when death took him by surprise. [Balzac does not seem to have known the many premonitory symptoms.] We were to have mended the '*Chartreuse de Parme*,' and a second edition would have made it a complete and irreproachable work. It is always a wonderful book the book of the distinguished."

Balzac might well eulogise Beyle, because this novelist of large receptivity, with a genius much more didactic than dramatic, although often deplorably deficient in good taste, owes much to Beyle; and we are not displeased to see that a very intelligent writer, Paulin Limayrac, has registered the debt—

"If Beyle took so many precautions not to let himself be seen, it was in order to see better, which is the distinctive character of the moralist. La

Bruyère kept in the shade, so that nothing should escape his penetrating and sagacious eye. St Simon, boiling over with ambition and genius, in traversing the court of Louis XIV. played during twenty years the comedy of indifference and mediocrity. Beyle is essentially a traveller and a critic; he mounts to all heights and descends to all depths. There is a whole side of Balzac that proceeds from Beyle; the 'Physiology of Marriage' is a direct descendant of 'De l'Amour.'

Paulin Limayrac adds as a piece of intelligence, which is no doubt authentic, that Beyle was very feverish during the printing of his books. Limayrac is not insensible to his defects. He says that he is "parfois quintessencié et peu accessible."

Charles Mousselet, one of the most chatty and amusing of modern French feuilletonists, characterises Beyle as one of those solitary spirits who are unquiet and analytical, and have disdained the suffrages of the world. This writer criticised "Armance" very severely, and found in the style *a ducal contempt for grammar*, and a determination to be freed from the usual rules of composition, but with a certain distinction and lively flashes of observation. He considers that he possessed the science of life and society, and that his art as a *litterateur* derived advantage from his social curiosity. Mousselet says, with truth, of a great number of persons living by literature in Paris—

"The men of letters live too much as men of letters, that is to say, that they don't mix sufficiently with non-literary society. Most of them stick to Paris like oysters to a rock. There is no doubt advantage in a regular life, but not in a monotonous one. They rise, go to work, and after work transport themselves, with painful regularity, some to cafés and others to theatres. In summer, they are at Bougival or Asnières. In vain you tell me that Paris is the great focus of heat and light. I answer, it is not good to live always in the fire. Paris becomes to the constant inhabitant a city of mere conventional forms and plagiarisms in language, with an unhealthy activity, so that time is not used, but snatched. It is a theatre with perpetual representation, morning, noon, and night, without *entre-actes*. Residing at Paris, one ends with its being impossible to make books but with other books. Paris gives wit and ingenuity, but not amplitude, energy, pathos, or the sublime. Paris is feverish, not impressioned. A man of letters who wishes to renew his ideas and vocabulary must travel to the provinces or in foreign countries. Beyle derived much from his travels, and Balzac owed much of his superiority to the largeness of his experiences. He was greedy of all knowledge and of change."

There are also some rather offensive characteristics given of Beyle by Charles Mousselet; for instance, that he wore stays, and was a "would-be gentleman without armorial bearings" (*gentilhomme sans blason*).

The verdict of Louis Ulbach is somewhat similar, and he characterises the chief merit of Beyle as the power of reproducing in a literary form his experiences of European society—

"Stendahl deserved more literary esteem during his life and fewer holo-causts after his death. In the analytic movement that followed the first ardour of the romanticism, and of which Balzac will remain as its most vivid and elevated expression, Beyle did his work with talent. He was not an artist who looked at the world through keyholes, but a man of drawing-rooms, who revealed his experiences to the outsiders and elsewhere. He styles him

an *espion du grand monde*, who will never reach the classes of that true public who ask for cordiality in exchange for its sympathies."

In this Ulbach is right ; a Dickens and a Henry Beyle were at the opposite poles of novel-writing. But in the battle for romanticism we cannot consent that Beyle should be placed in a position subordinate to that of Balzac.

M. Bussièrès knew Beyle intimately, and therefore his appreciation of him is not without interest ; he writes that "Beyle was more praised than read, more read than enjoyed, more cried-down than judged, more quoted than known ; a man who lived in a sort of clandestine celebrity, and who had an obscure and unperceived death."

M. Bussièrès finds that his death was not followed by those regrets that ought to accompany the death of a distinguished man ; but with all respect for M. Bussièrès, Beyle lived in a great manner for himself. He was an acute analytical writer, but not an actor in human affairs, or an intentional benefactor of humanity according to the usual formulas of political party, or of public and private benevolence. Although we do not call him a Colossus of art—far from it—yet he was, like Michael Angelo, Handel, or Beethoven, entirely wrapt up in his work, and having the instinct that that work would be less well done if crossed by services rendered to the public otherwise than by an artistic specialty. Beyle was not a public man, but a social man for artistic purposes ; and therefore we cannot agree with M. Bussièrès in wondering that the death of so peculiar and enigmatic an individual should not have been a public event of mark in the history of the most noisy metropolis of Europe. Beyle was above the crowd, and therefore the crowd did not miss him. The *odi profanum vulgus* is a disguised compliment to the select few, as admitted by M. Bussièrès. It might be called the motto of Beyle's life and writings : Beyle will always have a great reputation ; universal popularity he will never attain.

Having at every stage of the life of Beyle given the reader our own impressions of the man and the writer, little now remains of our task except a few additional inductions from the recorded opinions of his own most intimate personal friends. I have already quoted an expression of M. Francis Wey, in a letter of this year, 1873—"Hélas ! les témoins de cette vie sont devenus bien rares."

A chief characteristic of Beyle was his originality as a writer and his independence as an individual. But both his private correspondence and his published works abound in propositions that are paradoxical, and even palpably absurd. With the gold of reason there is a considerable dross of unreason. Notable was his non-comprehension of the religious sentiment. It is easy to understand that he was a freethinker at a period long previous to the publication of the works of an Auguste Comte, an Ernst Haeckel and a David Friederich Strauss ; for at that period of life when opinions are formed on the great problems of being, Beyle found French society to be generally irreligious, and the encyclopædists in full vogue, and the state itself had set aside all religious ritual as useless. The turgid writings of M. de Chateaubriand, and those of a Joseph de

Maistre and a Bonald, tintured too much as they were with asceticism, were not calculated to influence such an intelligence as that of Beyle. But he had no occasion to overwhelm with ridicule those who sincerely shared in the revival of religious feeling. Many just and good men are without the religious instinct; no really intelligent man should hesitate to respect it in others.

M. Ducoin, in his *éloge* addressed to the Académie Delphinale, observes, that notwithstanding the wit and talent which charmed the most brilliant societies, Beyle did not lead a happy life, owing to the singularity of his character and his irreligious opinions. He adds, "Alas! he that admired Montesquieu forgot the maxim of this philosophic writer, that the Christian religion, which seems to have for its object our happiness in the world to come, is the source of our happiness in the one we live in."

Beyle was a diner-out of the first lustre. All the persons that knew him admitted that he had in a high degree the gift of conversation. He lost no time in insincere compliments and in commonplaces. If he had the defect of paradox, he had also the charm of piquant originality, and of giving unexpected turns to conversation. His power was not in *bon mots* and witty expressions, but in a pervading dry humour. It was delightful to the auditors rather by constant glow than by bright flashes. To that mere play of words which often passes for wit he never descended.

Notwithstanding his Swiftian relish for pseudonyms and literary disguises, his character was sincere, but often proud and self-willed, to the damage of his fortunes. Fortunately his wants were small, and those enjoyments of the soul and the intellect which he prized above all others were not costly. Of his integrity there was no doubt. M. Bussières says, "The commissary-general, that might have made himself a millionaire, was found at his death to possess only personal friends and manuscripts."

Sainte Beuve found that there were two men in Beyle—one full of real kindness and good-nature, and the other the man of combat and dispute, with an appearance of hardness; and both Mérimée and Sainte Beuve remark his tendency to see base and grovelling motives in actions apparently generous. This came from having been always anxious to be what he called a "non-dupe."

We have already spoken of his dislike of tiresome people. Mérimée writes of Beyle—

"For him there were in the world only two sorts of people—those with whom he amused himself and those by whom he was bored. To make the smallest effort to put up with the latter was insupportable to him. The independent, or, if you will, the vagabond spirit of Beyle, resisted all constraint. Whatever interfered with his liberty was odious to him; and I am not sure if he drew a proper distinction between a bore and a bad man. His curiosity to know the mysteries of the human heart sometimes drew him into the company of persons for whom he had little esteem. But he said, 'At least one can learn something from these people.' When provincials asked him what was his profession, he answered, 'An observer of human nature.' A



person supposed that this meant that he was a police spy, and the shock he received was a matter of considerable amusement."

Mérimée informs us that Beyle disbelieved all the fine flowery speeches which historians put into the mouths of heroes and generals about to commence a battle; and he gives a speech which Beyle mentions he heard on the retreat from Moscow, as a genuine specimen of the reality of such harangues—"Tas de canailles, vous serez tous morts demain, car vous êtes trop j——f—— pour prendre un fusil et vous en servir." This pretty speech, which had nothing of M. de Chateaubriand's balanced periods, had the desired effect, and the column marched lustily on to take possession of the position ahead.

Beyle used to say that time employed in eating and drinking was lost to intellectual labour. One of his odd notions apropos of the bad cookery of Roman eatinghouses we have already given—that it would be nice to take a pill in the morning, and be satisfied for the rest of the day. But Beyle's practice certainly was the reverse of this theory. We may mention, as conclusive on this point, our own report from Civita Vecchia, which represents him as "un gran mangiatore;" and we may conclude, from the "*Mémoires d'un Touriste*," that Beyle had a foible for choice gastronomy.

The grand occupation of Beyle's life was writing. All his works were much revised and rewritten; but it was the thoughts, and not the words, that occupied Beyle. He was not in the least thin-skinned as to either public or private criticism. His literary friends could say anything to him, either about his opinions or his style, without his being offended, and he was equally frank in giving his opinion to his friends; his maxim was, that authors must run the gantlet of obloquy without shrinking.

With regard to his private friends, Colomb says that Beyle "has rendered few services to them compared with those which he received," and that even when he might have rendered some service, if an amusement presented itself, the duties of friendship were forgotten. Indeed, he was in many respects a light and thoughtless man. What a contrast to the severe obligations Goethe imposed on himself in this respect!

Beyle was so amusingly afraid of being divined, that Mérimée mentions that "his own notes were written so enigmatically, that after a few days they were unintelligible to himself." The reader may have remarked the strange mosaic of French and English in his letters to his sister, and an additional confirmation of this peculiarity was the difficulty, bordering on impossibility, of making anything of his autobiographical sketches in his collection of manuscripts in the library of Grenoble.

We have already said almost enough of his relations with the fair sex. He always sought to envelop his attachments in the most profound mystery. Colomb mentions that when he saw a happy couple, he was tempted to revolve matrimony in his mind; but not every man who has espoused absorbing studies is the fittest for the connubial state.

Beyle's chief amusement was the theatre, which does not destroy the

physical and intellectual powers, as low dissipation and excesses in stimulants does. What a sombre and melancholy catalogue is that presented by the toppers of British literature and art ! what glorious vital powers abused : what genius dimmed ; and what losses to posterity eager to appreciate and to applaud !

Beyle knew the impossibility of perfect government, and the difficulty of every government ; yet he was dissatisfied with all those of his time —with the despotism of Napoleon, who was the object of his sympathies and affections ; with the Restoration, the object of his antipathy, although it brought France a relative liberty of the press and of individuals ; and with that of Louis Philippe, which gave him his bread, and France still more liberty than the Restoration.

How difficult it is for men to know the favours of their destiny ! Had Beyle, this bold freethinker, been born a generation sooner, he might have pined in the Bastille, or expiated his scoffing by the fate of a Chevalier de la Barre. Born only half a generation sooner, this man of inflexible opinions and convictions might have been drawn into the vortex of the Revolution and perished on the scaffold. It was erroneously that he complained that he was born at the wrong time, and that, instead of a quiet comfortable existence under shelter of a stable roof-tree, he was condemned to bear with the masons, plumbers, plasterers, and carpenters getting the paternal mansion into a habitable state. Alas ! shade of Beyle ! this weary process is not yet over, and others born later than thee must wait in impatience and grumble at the long and incommodious process !

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## II.—THE “HAYDINE” AND “ROSSINIANE” OF JOSEPH CARPANI.

CARPANI had an existence not unlike that of Metastasio (poetical genius excepted). He was born and bred an Italian. He was brought up in a theological seminary, but his real passion was dramatic poetry and music ; and he ended his career as Italian poet of the Vienna Opera, and as one of the popular men of the old Vienna society of dilettanti in art.

Carpani was born in the Milanese highlands in 1752, and was therefore just twenty years younger than Haydn, and forty years older than Rossini. He studied at Milan and Paris, and although brought up by the Jesuits, and occasionally styled the Abbate Carpani, I do not find that he ever performed sacerdotal functions, although in his younger days he may have worn the costume of the clerical aspirants. He made his debut in Milan as a dramatic poet ; and on the occurrence of the French Revolution was editor of a newspaper opposed to the principles of that event. The subsequent political storms drove him to Vienna ; and an ophthalmia from which he suffered made it convenient for him to remain

in that capital, the seat of ophthalmic science—a distinction which it has acquired and maintained, as Erlangen has also done with its celebrated aurists.

It was during the last dozen years of Haydn's life that his friendship for this composer was consolidated, and that he profited by the personal reminiscences of this great musical genius—a period favourable for biographic labours ; for all Haydn's great works had already passed the public ordeal, and at the time when the old man lived in the Mariahilf, his memory was still sufficiently fresh in relation to the events of the earlier part of his life. His translations of the oratorios of Haydn may not have given room for poetical genius or invention, but they show a certain knack of felicitous adaptation with a view to musical execution—a merit not to be undervalued. These were the libretti in vogue when the youthful Rossini made that acquaintance with the masterpieces of Haydn which was not without considerable influence on his formation. Rossini caught the *fluency* of Haydn, but only at a later period of his career did he go through the labour of a Haydnian solidity of substruction.

Carpani did not, like Metastasio, produce poetry of a character to live, but he was ingenious, pleasing, and of prodigious fertility. He wrote libretti for Paer (Camilla), Pavesi, and the once popular although now almost extinct author of the "Schweitzer Familie-Weigl." He was, moreover, the translator of the "School for Scandal" of Sheridan—a masterpiece of wit certainly, although, according to my notion, the "Don Marzio Maldicente" of Goldoni is certainly not inferior to it as an acting play.

The "Haydine" is (making allowance for laughable Italian grandiloquence) a delightful work, full of a certain quaint, old-fashioned, respectful familiarity of the author with the public. He supposes the reader to ask, "But who art thou who darest to sit at the desk within the rails?" The response of the author is, "I answer with placidity, I am one who, born in the land of beautiful music, and endowed by nature with two good ears, have felt from the cradle love for this beautiful art, which is the pasture of great souls, the solace of the miserable, and the almost universal entertainment of animate beings. I contracted friendship with many of the most celebrated artists of the last century, and particularly with Haydn, the father of instrumental music."

Like most Italian writers, Carpani maltreats German orthography. Handel is written "Hendl;" Beethoven becomes "Bethowen;" and as I am now at the Appendix, I will, for those readers who know Italian, give a short extract from his euphonious bombast—a style that was practised by almost everybody in Italy during the first half of this century, but which the pressure, rapidity, and familiar style of daily journalism is now correcting, so that we may conclude that half a century hence literary Italian prose will become more lithe and limber than it has been in past generations.

"Amessa l'ecceellenza e superiorita della melodia Italiana io credo che il meglio che far possono li compositori Tedeschi, Francesi, Spagnuoli

ecc per vantaggiari le loro Melopée sia dopo l'esempio dato loro dal Haydn dal Graun, dal Mozart, dal Monsigni (Monsigny) ed altri; che Italiani non nacquero, di cercare di avircinarsi per quanto i loro idiomi il concedono a questa beata melodia degli Italiani. Ne la cosa sembrami granche malagevole. Purche il motivi sian chiari e ben marcati; amabili naturali, e non interotte le cantilene; facili insieme ed eleganti le idee, il periodo rotondo e di buona proporzione, a poco a poco la musica di codeste nazione si verra italianizzando e perfezionando senza perdere del suo proprio, &c. In some places, the grandiloquence is repugnant to taste. "Nel cruento baccanteggiare dell'anarchica rivoluzione di Francia si scompagina meta del Europa," &c.

In his comparison of musicians with painters, he makes out Pergolese to be the Raphael of music, and Mozart to be only the Giulio Romano. Handel as Michael Angelo will do, but the exquisite Giorgioni is represented by whom? By Ciccio de Majo, a considerable man, certainly, but not first rank, like Giorgioni. His idea of Gluck, compared to Caravaggio, is not amiss, with tremendous dramatic chiaroscuro. Most absurd is the comparison of Titian, with his immortal works, to the mere man of the day—Piccini. The prolific Guglielmi corresponding to Luca Giordano will also pass. Opposite Paul Veronese he sets down Cimarosa, with which posterity cannot quarrel, as the splendour and magnificence of Meyerbeer occupied the public a generation subsequent to Carpani. Altogether, probably no two men, either living or dead, could ever have agreed in a comparison of musicians to painters. If one man were to compare the utterly formless melody and strong orchestral colour of Richard Wagner to the last manner of Turner, with its gorgeous splendour and absence of outline, the dissentients would probably be as numerous as the assentients, although there may be grounds for the comparison.

As biographical works by contemporaries have an interest, if not a value of their own, which no subsequent and more complete works can set aside, and as the books of Carpani had great vogue and celebrity half a century ago, and will always occupy a place in the libraries of those persons who are curious on the musical history of the end of last century and the beginning of this, I may mention that the editions I have seen of Carpani are, first—

"Le Haydine ovvero lettere sulla vita e le opere del celebre maestro Giuseppe Haydn di Giuseppe Carpani, dedicate al R. Conservatorio di musica di Milano. Milano da Candido Buccinelli, Stampatore Cartaro contrada di Sta Margherita num. 1118-1812."

The second edition, "Riveduta ed accresciuta dall'autore," bears the imprint, "In Padua dalla tipografia della Minerva, 1823."

This second edition announces in the preface the coming "Rossiniane," which appeared in the following year, 1824, also at the Minerva press of Padua, and was translated into French by M. Mondo of Niort, two editions of which were published in 1836 and 1838. The title of the original work is—

"Le Rossiniane ossia lettere musica teatrali di Giuseppe Carpani in Padova dalla tipografia della Minerva, 1824."

It is not a biography of Rossini, like that of Haydn, but is a gossip with the public on the Italian theatre in general, beginning with a letter from Venice in 1804, in which he says, "The passion I have for theatres has found here a miser's America." He declares nevertheless that the spoken drama is tiresome, "in consequence of the public appetite for novelty being satisfied by the strange madness that all the Italians have of considering themselves as born poets." The manners of the Goldoni period were, in the first years of the century, not remote, as they are from our day; and although the Goldoni comedies are still very enjoyable, they certainly were much more so in 1804. Simon Mayer and Paer were the popular composers of that time, but Cimarosa and Paisiello still kept firm hold of the stage, although the latter was somewhat in the period of decline. The earlier operas of Cherubini and Spontini, of their Italian period (but now gone to limbo), were then on the repertory ("Les Deux Journées" had appeared at Paris, but 1804 was two years before the great celebrity of Spontini in the "Vestale"); and lastly, Viganò was in the height of his celebrity as a dancer and pantomimist; but his great fame as an inventor of ballets was some years later. As for Rossini, he was then a boy of twelve years of age.

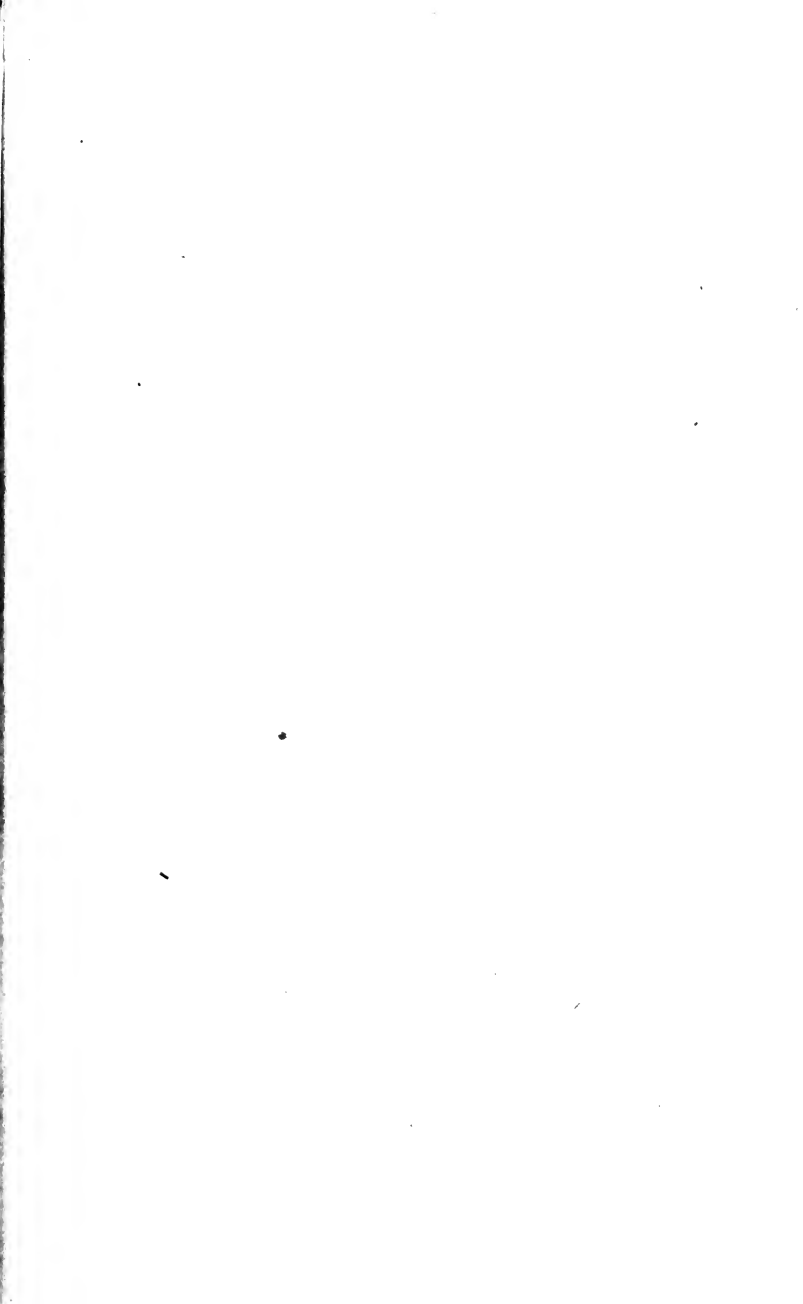
Of the music of Rossini, nearly twenty years later, he writes, "The irresistible magic of his original and natural cantilena may be different from the 'Fidelio' of Beethoven, the 'Medea' of Cherubini, or the 'Cortez' of Spontini; but show to an idolator of Rembrandt the 'Transfiguration' of Raphael, and he would require time to realise the difference." In the next letter, he *in propria persona* confirms this theory; for, writing from Vienna, he describes "Freyschütz," which had been produced in Berlin, and then brought out in Vienna, *as deficient in melody!*

I give the reader Carpani's impression of Madame Colbran-Rossini. "She has a delicious metal of voice, round and sonorous, particularly in the middle and lower notes. Her vocalisation is finished, pure, and insinuating. She has no points or bursts (*slanci di forza*), but a fine *portamento* perfect intonation; a most accomplished school, with grace in every ornament, and with runs of a couple of octaves of clear notes like a string of pearls; her action noble and matronly." This was written just after the great impression she had made in "Semiramide," and for which Rossini had written in the "Ercles vein" some of the choicest music that a perfectly finished soprano could possibly wish to execute—the "Dolce pensiero," the finale of the first act, and the two great duets.

Every admirer of Rossini may thank Carpani for the justice he has done to "Zelmira," after Beyle's rather slight appreciation of it. Such music indeed recalls something of the poetical and pleasing side of melancholy, as presented in consummate works of art, in the "Penseroso" of Milton, in the "Elegy" of Gray, and in the "Evening," typical of vanished illusions, of a Gleyre. The third act of "Zelmira" caught the admiration even of Hegel, a man generally lost in the clouds of sublime reverie or awful chimera. "Zelmira," more than any opera of Rossini,

indicated to Bellini the road which it was good to take. This opera prolongs the tender cantabile of "Tancredi," emulates the noble recitatives of "Ermione," and is the forerunner of the pathetic part of "Tell," that masterpiece of the riper period of the career of Rossini. "Zelmira" has one of the qualities that characterise the compositions of Beethoven—the power of charming the auditor, not strained at the outset, but progressing securely to the close of the composition.

THE END.









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